UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

A NARRATIVE INQUIRY INTO A COMMUNITY SCHOOL LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By

PETER LIESENFELD
Norman, Oklahoma
2014

A NARRATIVE INQUIRY INTO A COMMUNITY SCHOOL
LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND POLICY STUDIES

BY

_____
Dr. William Frick, Chair

_____
Dr. Courtney Vaughn, Co-Chair

_____
Dr. Lawrence Baines

_____
Dr. Gregg Garn

_____
Dr. Joan Smith

This work is dedicated to Leslie, Emily, and Benjamin.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my committee, Dr. William Frick, Dr. Courtney Vaughn, Dr. Lawrence Baines, Dr. Gregg Garn, and Dr. Joan Smith for their guidance. Their personal investment in my professional and scholarly development has been invaluable. In addition, I would like to acknowledge Dr. Howard Crowson, Dr. Larry Rossow, and Dr. Jeffrey Maiden for their mentorship through my studies at the University of Oklahoma.

I would like to thank the administrative team at Longfellow Middle School, the educators in Norman Public Schools, and my mentors including Dr. Joseph Siano, Karl Springer, Dr. Roger Brown, Dr. Nick Migliorino, Holly Nevels, Justin Milner, Jerry Privett, and Ryan McKinney. Their devotion to students is unmatched, and they have shaped who I am today. I would like to thank Chebon Marshall, Kyle Hurley, and Joe Bourland for their lifelong friendship, and willingness to support me throughout my entire life.

I would like to thank Scott Beck, who through countless morning runs has influenced, challenged, and nurtured not only my professional growth, but who I am as a colleague, educator, father, and husband.

I would like to thank every teacher I have ever had as a student, or had the honor to teach with. I have devoted my life to the development of children, and without my former teachers my explorations as a graduate student would not have been possible. Specifically, I would like to thank Jim Meiller, Brad Benson, and David Davisson who helped me find my passion for music. I would like to thank my lifetime friend and

teacher Robert Cason, who through his dignity and regard for all people showed me how to love unconditionally.

I would like to thank Ed and Madeline Rugh, who have cared for me unconditionally throughout my entire life. Their guidance and leadership inspired me to become an educator, and I continue to learn daily from their lessons. They are both teachers in the truest sense. Additionally, I thank my entire Tae Kwon Do family, who helped raise me and provide me life lessons that I have kept with me to this day.

I would like to thank my parents, who have both supported my growth and provided unending guidance throughout my entire life. They laid the foundation for who I am and everything I do, and I am forever in their debt.

Finally, and most importantly, I would like to thank my family for their love and support in everything I do. They are my angels and my inspiration. I strive to be a better person every day because of them.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

Abstract

The focus of this study is on examining the role of an educational leader through the process of developing and implementing a community school. As the primary researcher, I sought to contribute to the body of community school research by identifying organizational roadblocks, leadership perspectives, political influences, and whole child development while highlighting the importance of creating an environment capable of addressing the needs of children. Through this account, I seek to describe the importance of developing community schools and how their creation in similar circumstances might be facilitated.

I sought to gain an understanding of the process of developing a community school through my own experiences. For this purpose, I reviewed key moments that guided me in the past three years as principal at a public middle school. I collected data primarily through field notes, electronic communications, calendar events, recollections of conversations, and observations of my own lived experiences.

The findings of this study reveal the complex and turbulent nature of implementing sustained change in a school setting. Key components of this study include my introspective investigation of compliance, tenacity, child development, and the purposes of education. A rich account of my development is included to help aid those attempting similar changes. Findings also include my personal development as an educator, leader, and researcher relevant to implementing a community school at a public middle school. Human development and cultural capital are investigated in this study, providing further insight to my journey in ethical and moral decision-making surrounding these changes.

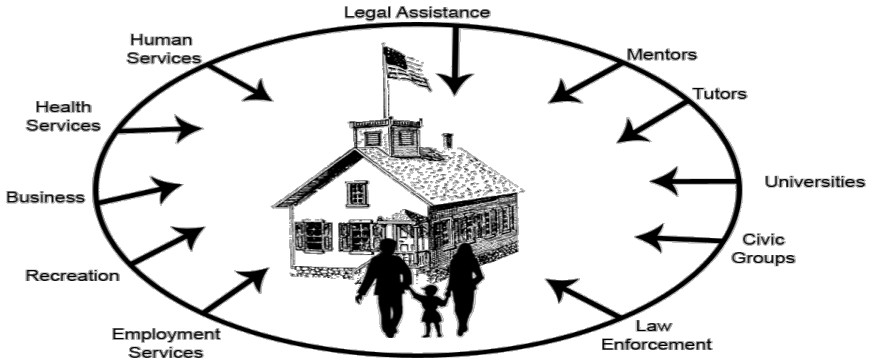
PROLOGUE

Critical Moments

Transitioning beyond organizational boundaries of institutionalized schooling while operating within existing structures has long been a focus of whole school comprehensive reform. Educators, public school advocates, politicians, academics, and employers have sought, over the course of many years, to initiate systemic organizational improvement at scale (Smith & O'Day, 1990). Among school models and district strategies, one approach, community schools, distinguishes itself by offering an example of the kinds of school structures and processes, along with leadership practices, that connect learning environments with a school's broader community.

Community schools are conceived, initiated, run, and sustained through comprehensive, collaborative democratic processes that situate family and community leaders in the center of addressing the needs of the whole child. Community in schools, or extended, full-service community schools (FSCS), identified as "community schools" in this study, use community partnerships and emphasize community collaboration where the school becomes the delivery point for comprehensive youth development, working holistically with children in response to systemic disadvantage. Milliken (2007) represents in Figure 1 the central position occupied by community schools on which community collaboration focuses (Children's Aid Society, 2013; Coalition for Community Schools, 2013; Cummings, Dyson, & Todd, 2011, p. 130; Dryfoos, 2005; Dryfoos, & Maguire, 2002; Milliken, 2007).

Figure 1.



Community school as coordinated agency hub and delivery point for collective neighborhood uplift [Illustration from Milliken, 2007]

Several school models developed through the Coalition for Community Schools, the Children's Aid Society, and the Harlem's Children Zone have created and implemented community schools in various locations across the country. Implementation models differ, but all researched cases have indicated significant gains in areas including student grades, standardized test scores, attendance, and high school graduation. Interesting differences can be found in their approaches: Harlem's Children Zone community schools employ a uniform implementation model, while the Children's Aid Society develops models through partnerships in each community resulting in a varied model. A comprehensive analysis of community school models may be found in Appendix 1.A. of this dissertation.

Legislative mandates, complex accountability structures, and shifts in requirements of schools have obliged school leaders to focus on narrow performance criteria (Corrigan & Grove, 2011; Howard, 2012; Lortie, 2009). Community schools

take a different, more holistic approach to student development. Community schools operate in a spirit of "progressive universalism," with a philosophy that in "societies characterized by inequalities, what is offered to all [can and should] be enhanced and intensified for those who currently have the least" (Cummings, Dyson, & Todd, 2011, p. 130). In my view, collaboration and tenacity as traits of school leadership are indispensable for effectively responding to pressures from local authority, community interests, and political mandates. Applying this philosophy requires the partnership of the entire community, and cannot be left to the school alone to implement and sustain.

Background of the Study

Some become building principals already embracing the community schooling model either consciously or by instinct. My recognition of the need for a community school came through a few critical moments in my career, and those incidents have changed not only my beliefs of the requirements of public education, but have also dramatically changed how I approach student learning and achievement. Unfortunately, my tenacity and perseverance at times conflict with my ability to openly embrace new learning opportunities, so my ability to refine my beliefs after these moments might have come slower for me than some.

The decision to enter the field of education began in college, during my sophomore year. I had attempted both science and engineering classes with success, but was still unsure of my future. I often wondered what life would look like in different fields, whether medicine, computer programming, engineering, or other computer science fields. While music had been a large part of my life in secondary school, and I continued to participate in college, I felt performing arts came too easily to me, and I

wanted to be challenged throughout my career. One afternoon I sat down with one of the music professors, who urged me to try music education as a career path. I explained to him that while music held a very important place in my life, I did not see myself enjoying it past college as it was beneath my abilities and talents. Ignoring my ego, he urged me to try one music theory course, and then decide if it was worth my effort. I did, and for the first time, failed a class in college. The shock of being so wrong about something I felt came so easily to me generated a serendipitous excitement; and it was then that I decided to pursue music education as a career. That decision (and story) is one I am sure the first principal who hired me would not have wanted to know about, but my career began two years later at a local middle school as band director. It was in my first years as a teacher that I discovered the passion which later would help shape my ambitions to form a community school.

Most band students in the classes I taught were motivated, dedicated, had supportive families, and had a plan for high school or beyond. While I enjoyed fostering growth within these students, I found myself especially interested in other students who seemed to have little support structures at home, experienced poor grades at school, or exhibited behavioral issues. As a first-year teacher I remember feeling that I was their only hope, and that it was my duty to be their *savior* in and out of school. I quickly learned through experience that my expertise and time were both limited, and I didn't have quite all the answers I thought I had for these students. I still felt the need to help however I could, and continued to find avenues to help. I fumbled through most of these attempts by calling random agencies I could think of, speaking to counselors that I

knew for ideas, and bouncing thoughts off various others in hope of finding solutions for clothing needs, health needs, or social-emotional support.

Then came my second year of teaching. I did not know it at the time, but my frustration over my inability to serve students in need effectively was manifesting itself through my behaviors at school. I became irritable, short tempered, and easily frustrated when talking with students. This led to a critical moment in my career, as I sat in my office next to my co-teacher, who later became one of my most important mentors in education. As I sat there, he calmly reached over and tapped me on the shoulder. When I turned to look at him, I could see whatever he was about to say to me meant a great deal to him. In a quiet voice, he said, "Pete, let me find you another job that you like."

I was shocked by his statement. I asked him what he meant by it, and he stated simply, "You don't like children. This career isn't good for you, and it isn't good for the kids. Let me help you find a job that you enjoy." I did not know how to respond in that moment, so I did not. In fact, I did not speak to him again for several weeks. While I was furious at first, as I reflected I realized he was right: all the pride I had taken in being the savior for students had somehow transformed into frustration and negativity. It was then I learned that although my job was not to save students, it was my job to show unconditional support, believe in them, and build significance in them through my words and actions. This fundamental belief guided me through my next five years of teaching, and allowed me to foster many positive relationships with students and their families, whether or not I could find resources or supports they needed.

When I entered administration my role shifted to less direct interaction with students, and more involvement with creating structures to facilitate student growth.

Navigating accountability expectations, addressing local and state mandates, engaging in ongoing community relationships, and most importantly, facilitating growth of teachers as they grapple with the engagement of learners, became my priorities. In this transition I became acutely aware of the complexities of teaching and learning in the classroom environment, but also realized a major part of my role was to help shield teachers from many outside forces while also striving to support them in any way I could. My passion for students expanded to their families, as I realized many with limited access to system resources were ill equipped to advocate for themselves or their children. This became more evident the more I spoke with teachers in professional meetings as we analyzed the growth of students. But so early in my career I was unaware of theory related to the development of forms of capital within institutional schooling (Adams, 2010; Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman; 1986; Coleman, 1987; Putnam, 2001).

Teachers continually discussed roadblocks they faced when attempting to pierce through the multitude of issues a student brought with him or her to the class from home in order to focus on the learning at hand. Poor housing/living conditions, health issues, emotional conflicts, and lack of basic needs plagued some students' families, and the efforts of the teacher to engage the student while ignoring these issues inevitably failed. My reaction at first was that of many administrators: control what we can, ignore the rest. Teach students how to overcome regardless of obstacles, and persevere. These bromides brought me back to my first years of teaching, and led to similar results. We ignore the realities of life that students bring into the school building at their peril (and ultimately our own); doing so diminishes our ability as educators to fully explore a

student's capacity for learning, and perpetuates a spiral of human and social capital suffocation (Leistyna, 2002). By requiring students to develop multiple identities – the home-self and the school-self – educators undermine their ability to fully nurture student potential in a culturally aware and contextually sensitive manner (Adams, 2010; Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman; 1987; Corrigan & Grove, 2011; Epstein, 2010). Consideration of all aspects of students' lives is essential in order to serve them at any level considered competent. My understanding of the ethical responsibility to not only focus on learning in the classroom, but also provide structures to serve the family to better equip the student for life in school and beyond came from two moments in my second year as assistant principal.

Most parents genuinely care about the educational experience their children have. This conflicts with some educators' thoughts, who reactively, without much professional reflexivity, attribute low student engagement or performance to "bad parenting." Parents spent countless hours in my office discussing issues with and about their children, and their seemingly unending challenges when trying to support them with their school work in the midst of the difficulties of life circumstance they were faced with at home. They looked to me for answers, and I had none. I began searching for services and agencies to provide help, but was met with bureaucratic hurdles that appeared insurmountable, crystallized in a specific moment as I sat with a family asking for help, and called a local counseling agency.

The parents recognized the need for counseling services, and the student was not only accepting of the idea, but encouraged by the thought of help. Upon calling the agency, I was informed that in order for services to begin, the parents would need to

come to the counseling office to fill out paperwork. The parents had no transportation, and had only been able to make it to the school because of its proximity to their home. I asked if they could give the information over the phone, and allow the counselor to come to the school to meet with the child. Due to liability issues, they explained to me, they could not initiate services over the phone, and since the counseling agency had not been approved through the central office of the school district, they would be unable to come to the school. The conversation quickly ended with an apology from the agency that they would be unable to help the family.

I pride myself in my tenacity, so I called six agencies after the conversation had ended with the first. Each agency, while varying slightly from the others, had approximately the same response: they were unable to help this student and family. I realized agencies outside the school were subject to similar regulations that schools are, but found it unimaginable that in a city with such an abundance of community services available to help individuals, I could not find a way to bring help to this family.

The second critical event that led to embracing a model of community school within the public education setting was when a father entered my office, sat down on the couch next to my desk, and began crying as he described what had recently happened to his son. He explained that he had been asking for help for years: he had asked for counseling, an alternative school setting, anything to help him. He felt his son was heading down a destructive path leading to drugs and violence, and he had no idea how to help him. And now, his greatest fear had become a reality for him: his child had been charged with a grave felony, as a student in seventh grade. As shocked as I was to hear this, it grew worse as he continued. He had already met with the judge and district

attorney, and both of them had informed him that due to circumstances of the case, it would be dismissed and his son would be placed on probation for a year. When he explained the previous issues with his son, his inability to help his son, and his fear of what his son was becoming, the judge responded that there would be nothing the "system" could do to help until his son was in jail. As he wept, the father continued to repeat to me that in order for his son to receive the help he needed, he would first have to be convicted of a crime, and end up in jail. He looked me in the eye, and asked me if I were him, what would I do to help my own son, rather than wait for something to happen and he end up in prison? All I could do was sit in silence, and cry with this father. I had no tangible answers.

Need for the Study

These moments shaped my next years as an administrator and building leader as I grew in experience as an assistant principal, and then moved to a head principal position at another school in the district. Within my first three years at my current school our administrative team has closely examined the requirements of our job, as well as our ethical responsibilities regarding the wellbeing and development of students in our building. Recognizing the needs of the community, as well as placing student needs at the center of our decision processes, we have begun forming a full service health clinic, capable of providing care to students and families from the community. This is the first step in our long term goal to incorporate a variety of services aimed at helping students and families in the community. Considering our ethical responsibility to serve the needs of our students and families, the decision to create and sustain a community school was a necessary one; with such a disruptive change to the status quo,

however, I expected a continuous stream of moderate turbulence as a result of these changes (Gross & Shapiro, 2009). Providing material, physical, social, and emotional support to enhance the learning environment as well as to nurture social, cultural, and human capital development compels us to continue, through the turbulence that we expect. Navigating this turbulence myself, I have felt alone and blind at times. By narrating my experiences, my hope is to help readers understand the paths taken through the past several years, and allow you to create your own story with my experiences as your guide.

Significance of the Study

While the importance of involving community into the learning environment has been researched and documented (Children's Aid Society, 2013; Coalition for Community Schools, 2013; Cummings, Dyson, & Todd, 2011, p. 130; Dryfoos, 2005; Dryfoos & Maguire, 2002; Milliken, 2007), the process through which practitioners can create such an environment has not been well documented, specifically in suburban areas where some students and families have access to services while others lack sufficient understanding of the system to engage in the same supports. As more principals and school leaders move toward implementing a community school model, the experiences narrated through this study may provide insight to the complex and turbulent world of change. My story has unique aspects, but I believe the knowledge gained from sharing my journey with other leaders will not only help them practically, but also speak to the educational institution of schooling as we help transform it together.

The requirements placed on school leaders today including district mandates, accountability measures by the state and federal government, unfunded requirements, diminishing funds available to school districts, new observation and evaluation tools, and the litany of managerial tasks are practically insurmountable. Just to maintain the status quo of day-to-day operational requirements of running a school, the principal must assume the role of a super-human, able to move from interruption to interruption at blazing speeds, while focusing without distraction on teacher improvements and student learning. Creating specific intervention systems for students with learning deficits, providing the same support structures for those students excelling and needing to extend their learning, maintaining a safe and welcoming learning environment, allowing time for teachers to plan and collaborate, and responding to parent and community needs leave little time for anything else. To navigate these issues, and find the time and energy to view the larger need of community, capital development, and creating an environment where the needs of the whole child are met both in the classroom and in the community, takes special character traits. Perseverance, tenacity, grit, and the unwillingness to accept failure as a stopping point are necessary above and beyond the extraordinary abilities already required of a building leader in public education. What sets innovative leaders capable of creating meaningful and sustainable change within the institution of mass schooling apart from those maintaining the status quo is a careful balance of the ability to handle such a large multitude of managerial and leadership tasks, together with an ability to move beyond those day-to-day tasks, see the larger picture, and push through all obstacles regardless of time or roadblocks. Informed by theory, practice is certainly improved both in managerial expertise and

leadership ability, but in order to engage the community and school in a democratic process to serve students most effectively, a leader must be willing to persevere regardless of obstacles.

There is a tendency, both in life generally and with schooling professionals in particular, to conflate location with consciousness (or to uncritically adopt the pretense that lived experience predisposes one to presence of mind) (Leistyna, 2002). This is not the case. On the contrary, and in acute critical awareness, the narration of my story is one that will be subjected to a thoroughgoing theoretical examination and analysis so as to engage and produce a substantive documented praxis – one that informs a broader and hopefully transformative profession and institution.

Procedures

This study utilizes narrative inquiry to explore my lived experiences through the development of a community school. More analysis of this methodology and reasoning appears in chapters one and two conceptualizing the theoretical lens through which I deliver my story (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Daiute & Lightfoot, 2004; Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, Zilber, 1998; Polkinghorne, 1988; Schwandt, 2007). My narration begins in chapter three, and is woven into analyses of theory and literature. I use field notes, journals, electronic communications, and memories to take the reader through my journey. I narrate conversations throughout this study. For dramatic effect and narrative flow, I have done my best to reconstruct those conversations, but none of the matter within quotation marks can necessarily be considered in any way an accurate transcription of any actual conversation. Each narrative chapter outlines a year of my experiences at Longfellow Middle School, and subheadings within each chapter

indicate specific times within each year. Each subheading within the chapters is followed by a narrative that describes events about which I have recorded meeting notes, emails, journals, calendar events, and recollections. In summary, my feelings, beliefs, biases, and actions are narrated so that the reader may better understand my thoughts and motivation, and by so doing use my voice with his or her own to continue the story. This narrative methodology creates an avenue for an ever-evolving story, where my voice, the reader's voice, and participants' voices create a powerful collective knowledge base, from which all of us can learn (Nash, 2011).

Summary

Mass schooling, as a sociological institution, continues to undergo a range of profound transformations as stakeholders collaborate to initiate change (Baker & LeTendre, 2005; Coleman, 1987). Community schools shift the focus of school improvement away from system improvements and curricular goals to center their focus on the whole child. This type of change necessitates family and community involvement, and moves the focus away from the status quo sustained by educational leaders. My exploration of social constructs, experiences, and growth throughout this study, while unique, will allow the reader to critically examine my story and combine with his or her own, hopefully to inform and continue this transformational process.

CHAPTER ONE

Stories and Story Telling

Storytelling is part of our nature; stories provide us with connections to each other and play a central role in communication (Lieblich, Mashiach, & Zilber, 1998). One of the most important ways we learn about ourselves is by reading stories from each other, narrative accounts of our own lives through history. Personal narratives become an identification of one's self, and through that identification, the story can be told to others to share experiences (1998).

Narratives in research can be a part of a traditional scientific analysis, and can also be used as a departure from the impersonal approaches of traditional research (Lieblich et al., 1998). Narrative research is thought to be an artistic representation of experiences rather than a formal reproducible study. There is a growing need in fields of study to incorporate this form of analysis; therefore providing clear sets of rules or approaches is warranted. Lieblich et al. (1998) define narrative research as referring "to any study that uses or analyzes narrative materials" (p. 2). Daiute and Lightfoot (2004) use the term "narrative analysis" in a broader sense, representing human development through use of stories.

A narrative contains three basic elements: an outline of a situation, an event, and results of that event (Czarniawska, 1998). Plot is important to provide reference to these elements, and also drive the story being told forward. Ambiguous and explicit points may be made throughout the plot, allowing the reader to interpret directly what the author wishes to express, or to develop his or her own interpretation of the information presented. While scientific knowledge involves formal logic and causality

which may have seemingly random connections, narrative knowledge is more common to how we learn and communicate. Social theory involves a distinction between action and behavior. Behavioral descriptions presented alone would make little or no sense; in order to gain meaning the descriptions must be framed around history and life experiences (Czarniawska, 1998).

Time and conflict may be used to tell a story in a compelling manner, while describing those life experiences (Daiute & Lightfoot, 2004). A narrative explains relationships and meaning, while scientific methodologies attempt to demonstrate meaning free of interpretation. The interpretation of the narrative relies on the author's interpretation of how events relate to one another and the surrounding world, as well as his or her own subjectivity. While scientific methods analyze events and outcomes in our world, a narrative connects this information in a meaningful way (Czarniawska, 1998). Narrative research can include data represented in a story, field notes, or personal letters. Narrative inquiry is used during the formation of objective research tools, or can be used to further explain and provide meaning between objective surveys and the sample from which they came. Real life problems can be addressed by a narrative approach to bring a more personal representation of data gathered, and also create a voice for those typically not heard in society. A narrative research approach can also be used to directly address contents of literature, communication, or development and plot, instead of taking an existing research question and providing a real-world connection to it (Lieblich et al., 1998).

Daiute and Lightfoot (2004) discuss narrative analysis as a tool to discover themes drawn from literature to explain the unique features of lives, and it is a way to

represent and organize knowledge and experiences in life. Narrative analysis incorporates interpretations by the reader and researcher, and those interpretations guide "perception, thought, interaction, and action" (Daiute & Lightfoot, 2004, p. x). Additionally, narrative inquiry incorporates a multidimensional approach to lived experience by addressing the

> knowledge [that] rises in and through practice, through our corporeal, temporal, spatial, and relational lived experiences. These experiences, the kind of tacit knowledge are hard – sometimes impossible to put into words – because they reside more deeply in our bodies than our minds. (Henriksson, 2007, p. 6)

Data for narrative analysis can include interviews, documents, memoirs, autobiographies, and other personal documents (Daiute & Lightfoot, 2004). Fictional texts, as they relate to the research, may be used as well, and data can come in a non-physical format including experiences of lives outside an interview, or about life as a whole (2004). Historical narratives, or a way to present events ordered by narration or "poetic logic," are one way to describe events and present data (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 62). Polkinghorne (1988) describes other forms of rendering events through narration including literature and myth, much like fictional texts described by Daiute and Lightfoot (2004).

In education, we are faced with data on a daily basis in the forms of tables, charts, and graphs that include results usually comprised of numbers. These data taken independently may influence decisions which affect change in a school or district, and without a narrative connecting these figures and charts, the decisions being made may not involve the necessary elements to produce expected outcomes. Social relevance to

data allows for a more complete picture of an event or study (Czarniawska, 1998). Narrative methodology allows interpretations that are unique and that cannot be duplicated in charts, graphs, and surveys (Lieblich et al., 1998).

Two main areas of narrative research are described by Lieblich et al. (1998) when analyzing life stories: "holistic versus categorical approaches" and "content versus form" (p. 12). "Categorical" describes a problem shared by a group of people being researched, "holistic" is more of an exploration of the person as a whole and how he or she relates to a current situation. Content versus form is further divided into holistic and categorical for each of these, resulting in four different modes in reading a narrative (Lieblich et al., 1998). The holistic-content viewpoint uses a complete picture of a person and focuses on the content, where the holistic-form viewpoint is gained through plots within the whole life. The holistic view of people's lives is a way to examine issues not as if they are in a vacuum, but due to all factors impacting the life (Daiute & Lightfoot, 2004). Similarly, the categorical-content approach looks more at the analysis of the content's categories, and the categorical-form mode looks at specific characteristics of the narrative (Lieblich et al., 1998).

Lieblich et al. (1998) describe one method of presenting a narrative through the use of a life story, and incorporate various ways of analyzing the information. Daiute and Lightfoot (2004) state, "narrative discourse and metaphor are excellent contexts for examining social histories that influence identity and development" (p. xii). Finding themes in texts by the researcher can be done through use of full texts, verbatim texts, or edited texts of interviews. Reading life stories through the various lenses including holistic and categorical, many different themes emerge. As different perspectives are

analyzed, the researcher and reader interpret the information relating to their own unique experiences, and can have very different outcomes based on those interpretations. Through a narrative, the author reveals his or her own personal experiences through the interpretations presented and structures used (Lieblich et al., 1998). Imagination when interpreting literature is not passive, rather it takes an active role in the narrative. Not to be confused with images in the mind, imagination by the researcher allows his or her self to become a part of the story, with an active part involving personal experiences in interpretations (Daiute & Lightfoot, 2004).

The categorical-content, or structure analysis, includes the researcher in identifying a "prototypical life course or structure" (Lieblich et al., 1998, p. 89). Using this method requires the reader or researcher to pay careful attention to the surrounding situations involved in the situations presented. Axes are identified, and a thematic focus of the plot is also identified. In structure analysis, the form of the story is more important than the story itself. From this, identification of the dynamics of the plot can be inferred from parts of speech. In the categorical-content perspective, many approaches are possible, but usually include selection of the subtext seen as the content universe of the area studied, defining the content categories, sorting the material into categories including specific sentences, and drawing conclusions from the text (Lieblich et al., 1998).

Categorical-form analysis involves the researcher attempting to learn something about the interviewee that might not have seemed apparent from looking only at the content. Thought processes are interpreted, and a theoretical framework for cognitive skills can be employed. The chosen framework will inevitably have limitations, which

are important to note when discussing results found in the form analysis (Lieblich et al., 1998).

Organization theory in literature involves a form of artistic ability to make connections, allowing for reflection within practice. A narrative approach to organizational theory creates at times arguable stances based on interpretation, which lends itself to a reinvigoration as meaning through creativity is scrutinized. In organizational studies, narratives include research written in a story-like fashion, collections of organizational stories, interpretations of organizational life, and a literary critique (Lieblich et al., 1998).

A narrative does not require a specific form of methodology (Czarniawska, 1998). Established methods and practices as well as individual practices leading to self-reflection can all be formatted within a narrative. Anthropology, described by Czarniawska (1998), involves field work and observations of life as an enacted narrative. As she describes, "Organizational narratives are both inscriptions of past performances and scripts and staging instructions for future performances" (p. 20). Fieldwork involves words of others that should be viewed as valid as the author's narrative. Anthropological work involves prejudices of the researcher if done within his or her own culture, and also can be viewed as an outsider with no connection if observing foreign cultures (Czarniawska, 1998). While most narrative studies are utilized for small studies including single case studies, these include rich data that can be explored in a comprehensive way that may not be possible in traditional scientific works including surveys and questionnaires (Lieblich et al., 1998). Generally in narrative research there are no specific hypotheses that the researcher forms, then works

to prove or disprove. Instead, an exploration of ideas and thoughts through interviews and readings relating to the issue aims the researcher in specific directions.

If conducting narrative research in the field of education, a practitioner in the field must be aware of his or her feelings and prejudices and not believe that he or she has the background knowledge or experience sufficient to determine meanings behind actions or results. Many actions and thoughts cannot be observed by the eye, and must be examined by shadow observations and observant participation (Czarniawska, 1998). As technology progresses, observation methods, interview techniques, and participation may change, and by doing so present more challenges to writing a narrative that is both creative and representative of the actions and situations presented.

Conducting fieldwork requires enculturation, during which the researcher's presuppositions about culture are challenged (Czarniawska, 1998). Studying action nets, and not just single phenomena, is vital to understanding the overall structure of the issue being researched. Through these nets, access becomes a struggle at times, which the researcher must negotiate through in order to understand the complete issue. In an educational setting, these nets include policy makers, local boards, schools, teachers, students, families, community members, and businesses. Navigating through these areas requires both time and enculturation, or if the researcher has already gained certain social and cultural capital, he or she may be granted easier access. While this access is easier for researchers already in the field of study, it also increases the challenges of presuppositions, which the researcher must take into consideration when performing the fieldwork. Even more important is the view of the researcher who is already a part of the field. As Czarniawska describes, "The picture of a researcher's

identity threatened by fieldwork violates the image of a mature adult and a competent professional" (1998, p. 41). The closer the researcher is to the nets and culture, the more blurred his/her role becomes, and must be considered when a practitioner of the field is doing research on his or her own culture. While objectification of the subjects the researchers is studying may be impossible, the researcher's knowledge of those surrounding him or her also includes benefits of respecting unique situations and creates a dialogical relationship with the field of study (Czarniawska, 1998).

Referencing work of individuals involves several issues in organizational studies considering the problems of copyrighting discussions or ideas in culture. The amount of continued copyrighted material produced on the Internet, those that use copyright laws to manipulate information for their benefit, or where researchers present their work at the expense of those being researched is increasing (Czarniawska, 1998). Czarniawska indicates that references themselves tell part of the story in research, evidenced by her analysis of information on "netscape" (1998, p. 58). In the past fourteen years the Internet has seen dramatic changes involving copyright law, and understanding her reference from 1998 helps see the overall picture of the research she is conducting.

Referencing material in organizational studies must not consider only ahistorical information, and also must be presented in a way that integrates into the telling of the story, as part of the argument being made (Czarniawska, 1998). Referencing work in the educational setting should include context, both historical and social, as a part of the examination of the current state of affairs. Appropriate references while telling the story of educational culture will provide readers, no matter the year or place they are

reading, a point of reference to better understand the thoughts and ideas being presented. Currently, accountability, high stakes testing, and new federal and state mandates are prevalent in the educational environment, but this was not always the case. Understanding current issues, no matter the time the research is being read, is crucial to using it to further the field of study.

According to Czarniawska (1998), there are distinct differences between conversation analysis and discourse analysis. In conversational analysis, the ones speaking to each other are important actors in the story; in discourse analysis, the information is central to the analysis, the actors are unimportant. Conversation analysis uses the actors involved, as well as surrounding information including time period and surrounding events. Also, researchers must consider exploration of the reader, in which he or she "stands in for the author, thus constructing a new text, although with an original one as a starting point" (Czarniawska, 1998, p. 67). Researchers may want to leave open-ended ideas purposefully to allow the reader to interpret outcomes differently, but should be aware of the varied interpretations that might occur based on the presentation.

Exploration has created issues regarding validity of studies (Czarniawska, 1998). Researchers presenting information should validate it through similar works, conversations, and other explorations, in order to create a study that should be reliable in that it should be able to be reproduced in similar situations. Research results tend to be repeatable not because of variables and situations, but more because of the dominant rules of scientific research. The usefulness of the study and its ability to evoke feelings of purpose are important aspects of written work. This can be accomplished by creating

field reports written in a realist perspective, conveying the feeling of the researcher (and reader when reading the report) being there and having credibility for the study. Naïve realism can be avoided, according to Czarniawska (1998), by using ironic realism, microrealism, and polyphonic realism. These methods allow the researcher to synthesize multiple contradictory narratives from multiple sources and find common rationality weaving through all of them. A narrative approach includes constant reflection as research is being conducted. The narrative is created for exploration and expressing reflexivity both of the researcher and the reader. This type of analysis allows for an exploration of how the self relates to society (Daiute & Lightfoot, 2004). If narratives are situated actions, described by Daiute and Lightfoot (2004), then positioning analysis involves how the characters are understood in the story. Whether the narratives are about the self or others, they are always affected by the speaker's subjectivity. Subjects in research must "agentively construct their situated positions, and in this process both normative discourses as well as their individual sense of self are called into existence" (p. 153).

CHAPTER TWO

Methodology

Narrative Inquiry and My Voice

Chapter one outlines the narrative form of writing and how readers interpret and respond to it. Stories are crafted so that we may interact with them and each other with our own unique subjectivity. By sharing our stories we learn more about ourselves and others with shared experiences. Chapter two describes the specific methodology of narrative inquiry and how it is used to share my experiences involving the creation of a community school.

A narrative inquiry creates a shared experience between the researcher and participants of the study in a combined social experience taking place over a specific time and place (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Stories are not described and read, they are experienced and relived. A narrative inquiry is central to the understanding of experience, rather than a presentation of data sets, methods, and conclusions. These experiences are grounded in time, and in an understanding of the time surrounding the experiences they create historical context, current understanding, and implications for the future. When designing a narrative study around implementation of a community school in a public school district, the histories of all actors in the narrative, the system, and the researcher are vital to sharing the experience. Narrative signs are presented and explanations are given to create understanding and provide meaning to actions within the story as it unfolds (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Positioning myself at the center of this narrative adds "creative vitality and personal relevance to social knowledge"

(Nash, 2011, p. 18), and critically examining my beliefs and feelings against socio-historical contexts provides deeper insight to my research.

Theory drives formal scientific research, beginning with a hypothesis. Narrative inquiry begins with experience and life stories (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Generally, the narrative inquiry begins with the researcher's autobiography as it relates to the problem or "puzzle," and a tension exists between the common notion of how to present a problem or argument, how to incorporate a literature review, and how to describe methods, on the one hand, versus an exploration of time and lives through experience, and infusing the problem within the story beginning with the researcher, on the other hand. Literature reviews and research about people and places become stories of lived lives and experiences, affected by their social world around them and their own histories. Every person comes to a narrative inquiry from a different perspective, and therefore we will all struggle with the personal tensions created by such an informal approach. My unique perspective and story will lead to varied interpretations by each reader and hopefully allow for responses in a shared continuing story (Nash, 2011). Despite this seemingly messy approach, the goal of a narrative inquiry is to produce a defensible research text (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

The narrative inquiry is situated within a metaphorical three-dimensional space, incorporating interaction, continuity, and situation (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Using these three spaces, the researcher is pulled forward and backward, in and out, finding places as the narrative unfolds. New questions, data, and puzzles emerge as these three dimensions are grappled with, and complexity, ambiguity, and uncertainties are uncovered. The researcher is placed in the past, present, and implied future as well,

and as the researcher uncovers more information centered on the problem, his or her own past experiences come to the surface as well, and shape the current understanding of the issue and imply future plotlines.

The researcher asks those reading the study to interact with it actively to see new meanings in the work and provide avenues for future studies as well. Narrative inquirers work with both the participants in the study, as well as themselves. At times this can become uncomfortable, as secrets of both participants and the researcher may be uncovered, and must be presented, creating vulnerabilities among all parties involved in the research. In a narrative inquiry it is impossible for the researcher to stay objective, distant, and unattached to the situation (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

As the researcher becomes an active player in the story unfolding, a tension exists within the closeness the researcher has to the participants (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). One argument holds that if the researcher does not become fully involved in the experience and participants, then he or she cannot fully understand the lives or situation being examined. On another side, some argue that if the researcher becomes too close to the events and participants, he or she loses objectivity. However, narrative inquiry's main mode of collecting "data" involves becoming fully involved, so it is important for the researcher to be aware of this tension, and through participation and creating the field texts, the researcher can move in and out of this closeness as the action unfolds throughout the study. Notes, pictures, literature, memoires, and other forms of information help the researchers find distance while they engage in the research. These field texts and other informational sources help create historical and environmental context for the study. Over time, through telling and retelling of the story, new beliefs

may emerge regarding the events from the study; the researcher must pay careful attention to these field texts and represent them sufficiently to avoid "miseducative experiences" where those reading years from now interpret the story in an unhealthy manner (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Again, a tension exists between the researcher and the narrative inquiry: the intent is to create as much of an open experience as possible, so readers can experience the story and provide their own interpretations, but at the same time the researcher does not want the reader to veer too far away from the intended experience. This is a difficult task—students sitting in the same classroom listening to the same information from the teacher may interpret the instruction very differently. Administrators working on a plan to incorporate a new health facility in part of a school may be imagining very different physical layouts, and very different motivations for attempting to install the health clinic in the first place. By recording journal notes, autobiographical writings, field texts, letters, conversations, family stories, documents, personal artifacts, and life experiences, the researcher can attempt to gather as much information from the participants to not only paint a full picture of the events and actors, but also honor the events in a true manner. These notes incorporate "temporal shifts" from both the researcher and the participants: conversations, thoughts, and experiences are created through thoughts of present and past and act as a frame of reference to feelings and actions. As Clandinin and Connelly (2000) explain,

> The inquirer needs to be aware of the details of place, of the nuanced warps in time, and of the complex shifts between personal and social observations and

their relations…and to be aware of the mutuality of the interaction. (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, p. 91)

The transition from field text to research text includes a justification through the autobiographical context of the inquirer (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Social and personal significance of the events being interpreted must be conveyed in the research text. The narrative must fit in the theoretical context in the field of study and provide a unique interpretation or understanding in order to push the field forward (Nash, 2011). Rather than formulate a specific problem to be addressed in the research text, the researcher provides a context through which reformations of thought and questions can be discovered. The problem is viewed as a puzzle that can be revisited and introduced in different perspectives to continue the learning process. When considering method, the researcher must make theoretical considerations, practical field-text oriented considerations, and interpretive-analytic considerations (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

What sets narrative inquiry apart from other methodologies including phenomenology, biography, ethnography, case study, and grounded theory, is the situated experience and the landscapes on which the story is created through use of the narrative (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Nash, 2011). When considering field-text to research-text, the inquirer must shift from the closeness of daily interactions and involvement with participants to a more global view to analyze and interpret the field texts and present them in a research-focused narrative. The social significance and the researcher's interpretations shape the field texts into research texts. The presentation of the research text is also determined by the researcher's personal taste. Whether it be a

collection of artifacts, an argument, a drama, or report, the researcher defines the space from which the story will unfold.

Clandinin and Connelly describe creating a narrative inquiry as the inquirer moves back and forth between the three dimensions of writing research texts where the researcher "looks backward and forward, inward and outward, and situates the experience within place" (2000, p. 140). While formalistic texts on social structures may focus on participants as variables in categories, a narrative inquiry provides a way to create a world of rich detail from which the researcher can weave specific critiques and feelings through it. The reductionist "boundary," as Clandinin and Connelly (2000) describe it, is the space in which the inquirer works between information from participants as fact versus the collection of information from multiple sources to create a more complete picture. When memories are recalled, participants will present them as fact, where there may be an entirely different reality present by reviewing information from other people and literature. The inquirer forming the research text must consider both positions when writing. Honoring the participants in the story is important, and presenting the issue as it is situated in the world is important as well.

Another consideration when creating a narrative inquiry is the idea of uncertainty (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). When participants and events are interpreted as constantly growing rather than static points of data, the inquirer must mold the narrative to incorporate this growth rather than attempt to fix the study in one specific place and time. Interpretations of an event must be considered in their historical context and location, but the purpose of a narrative inquiry is to become part of the story, and by doing so, new perspectives will come to light and can be integrated

into the story no matter the time or place of reading the narrative. Narrative inquiry writers must shape the entire dissertation text before beginning. Since the dissertation is a narrative story, it is generally not separated into specific chapters including methods, literature review, results, or conclusions. The elements of the dissertation must be woven into the story in a continuous way, in a manner in which the reader is not distracted from the story with presentation of data or facts. The story is organic, and form of the entire work is vital to producing the wanted effects (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Finally, there are several areas of concern that must be considered when producing a narrative inquiry. Ethics, anonymity, ownership, how the researcher is perceived, fact versus fiction, and the inquirer as the critic all must be addressed when creating an examination of participants and events (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Ethics are evaluated throughout the entire narrative, including approval to do the research, informed consent, and a protection of the participants, honoring what they believe. Anonymity must be considered as well, as some participants are very willing to share their identities, but others are not. The inquirer must be careful to protect all participants in a manner that does not expose those wishing to remain anonymous through the presentation of other people and events surrounding that participant. If the narrative does true justice to the participants and events unfolding, who owns the narration? Are the participants not an equal owner of a dissertation? Clandinin and Connelly (2000) view ownership more as a question of responsibility to those the researcher interacts with throughout the experience, and the awareness of how the research text will be read. Sensitivity to how the researcher is storied by participants

and future readers is an important consideration as well. The researcher does not want to be viewed as only fulfilling the requirement of the dissertation, using the environment studied as a lab. As the dissertation is being created, the story unfolding can take on a life of its own. It is important to constantly evaluate the field texts so that the artistic world being portrayed is an accurate one, not one of fiction created from the mind of the inquirer. Finally, critiques of the work as it unfolds are important to consider as the inquirer creates the dissertation (Nash, 2011). It is also important for the inquirer to not overly critique the work as it is created (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

The overall goal of the narrative will be to explore the shared experiences of attempting to implement a community school at a local school in Norman, Oklahoma. The impetus, goals, hurdles, struggles, my personal beliefs, and increased understanding of community schools will be woven into the story as it is presented. The goal of the study is not to present a "cookbook" on how to create a community school; it is a study in the complexities of human interaction, community involvement, parenting and parental support, shared vision and goals, educational systems and history, and human, social, and cultural capital.

Woven into this study will be an analysis of multiple theoretical frameworks in and around community schools, organizational development, and institutional research. This analysis will be woven into the context of the story so that the reader will experience growth and knowledge involving a community school idea in approximately the same way in which I did. By sharing literature and studies involving community schools in this manner, the shared experiences of the actors in the story and the reader are intended to be parallel: my conceptions of what a community school looks like, how

it is formed, and what its purpose is shifted as I researched more, and I hope to allow the reader to grow in the same way through the study. As my knowledge of community school systems increased, so did the complexity of the problem facing the school. Financial decisions, logistical issues, teacher misconceptions, administrative hesitations, and my own changing beliefs all play a large part in how this implementation has occurred. Various models of community schools will be presented in the study, described in context with my experience in attempting to create one; my intent is to form a new set of issues surrounding the idea of creating a system that seemingly rivals the formative influence of family through formal schooling.

CHAPTER THREE

Year One

My first year as principal at Longfellow Middle School began with the initiative of a lifetime: the opportunity to create an environment where services would be provided to students and families in a real and meaningful way. What I had struggled with for five years prior would have a solution presented before I even began my tenure as principal. What I was unprepared for was the necessary knowledge and experience to navigate the multitude of issues surrounding the organizational, developmental, and implementation of such a venture. While I had harnessed success in previous years with the bullish attitude of action before thought, I would find that in this role, attempting to implement such a drastic change to the school environment, I would be in way over my head.

Summer: White Boards and Vision

The middle school where I am currently principal is one of the oldest school buildings in Norman. Once housing the high school, it has undergone many changes in the past century. Renovations and improvements over the years have created an interesting duality: in one area of campus we have newly overhauled hallways, lockers, and classrooms. In other parts of campus the facilities are over thirty years old, a stark contrast from the newly constructed enhancements. There are many buildings on campus, a unique feature which sets it apart from the other three middle schools in town, a result of its long history in Norman. One building in particular, the old cafeteria, was empty when I started my tenure at the school. Old dark tile lined the floors, many ceiling tiles were missing, the old kitchen area held non-working

machinery covered in dust from neglect. Other than a storage area, it was just a decaying building on the back side of campus.

The campus is land-locked, nested near the center of town, surrounded by housing and businesses, including a large church and the town's main hospital. The softball field consists of the field, one set of metal bleachers outside the fence, two dugouts, and a portable fence which students erect prior to games, encroaching into the 40 yard football practice field. After school practices involve both softballs and footballs flying into both practice areas, but without the needed space, our teams must share what little there is in the outside area. The district has been bidding on nearby houses as people move out, so we are gaining more space, but we still do not have enough to accommodate the needs of our students. We have even utilized space across the street from our campus, where a portable classroom has been placed. Students and teachers have grown used to finding creative ways to use what limited space we have to accomplish our curricular needs.

I have spent my entire life in Norman. I attended Monroe elementary, then Whittier middle school, West mid-high, and graduated from Norman high school in 1994. I began my teaching career at Irving middle school, taught at Norman high school, then was assistant principal at Alcott middle school for five years before being named principal at Longfellow Middle School. In my life I have been in many of the schools in the district, but had never spent time in Longfellow to meet students and get to know them. I remember wondering what these students would be like, knowing the makeup of students being served on free and reduced lunch was higher than any school I had either attended or worked in. I was nervous that the population of students would

be beyond my ability to motivate, and I would be unable to make any real difference in their lives. I felt as if I were entering a foreign land, unable to speak the language or understand the customs of those I would be living with for the next several years of my life. What I perceived quickly after beginning the school year was that students in Norman are very similar, regardless of demographic description. This perception led to some negative results, which I would realize years later: by generalizing students and families into categories I was forming judgments of their abilities and inabilities to grow by my standards, thus creating an imbalance of symbiotic development (Freire, 1968/2000).

My understanding of student development was naïve; I placed myself in the dominant role assuming both responsibility and understanding of the needs of students. My assertion that I alone possessed the keys to liberation from an underprivileged and often times oppressive social context unwittingly positioned me as the oppressor, and my notions of granting students and families the only way to a better life perpetuated false generosity on my part (Freire, 1968/2000). Freire argues in his theoretical analysis the need for power welling from the "oppressed" in order to free both the oppressed and the oppressor. In my beginning moments as a head principal I focused on a one-sided development model, and only through experience learned the true power of partnerships between students, families and alternatively the oftentimes intransient qualities of institutional schooling. This understanding came much later; at the time, I looked at data and demographic makeup alone and used that information to guide my perception and decisions.

The student body at Longfellow is primarily Caucasian, making up 68% of the 686 students. Minority populations make up the remainder, with the Hispanic/Latino filling the largest portion at 10%. Students identified as gifted make up 30% of the school, and 20% are served under individualized education plans under IDEA. Longfellow has a free and reduced population of 52%, meaning over half of our student body receives assistance with meals for both breakfast and lunch. Many of the students served through our free and reduced meal program also benefit from community donations for after school meals: counselors deliver backpacks full of food to students to take home on weekends so they may have meals before returning the next week.

I find interesting parallels between our school facilities and our student body of approximately 700 6th through 8th graders; some families navigate the educational system with ease, while others seem to feel blocked from access to supports and service structures. I feel the support systems surrounding public schools have neglected some students and families just as we have neglected the vacant cafeteria building. As I entered my role as principal at this school, I had little experience in bridging this gap for families to provide them access to help, but I was determined to find a way. A question of helping students confronted me before I could even set foot in the main building on the first day after being named principal. As I exited my car, I was asked to come across the street to the free-standing portable classroom where some construction men were working. Longfellow was in the middle of construction from a bond election, and some project supervisors wanted to speak with me about the progress of the project.

I entered the small classroom hesitantly. I looked around the room and saw several men, some working on blueprints, and two other men dressed in suits, were

silently watching me. I approached them in my usual boisterous manner; it had served me well in the past to break any tension during a new encounter with strangers. While I believed my charisma alone could ease tensions in initial meetings and drive decisions forward among those I led, situational awareness including sociocultural contexts would be vital to effective and sustainable change (Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004). I joyfully greeted them, introduced myself, and asked them how I could help them.

The architect, Shawn Lorg, spoke first. He was a tall man, slender and wearing a suit that I believed substantially out-priced mine. He began by explaining his prior work with CEOs of large organizations. He had worked most recently on a multi-million dollar project with a hospital, and during that process the CEO had changed, and a new one had been appointed. I knew a question was coming soon in this conversation, and piecing together the details -- including the men in the room (with obviously more experience with the layout of the campus and history of decisions made there), the projects they had recently worked on, and me having no understanding of the scope of the current project, nor what authority I had on any decision-making process -- was making me nervous enough to begin sweating. I wondered at the time if they could sense my nervousness, or if they noticed the beads of sweat forming on my forehead. Just then came the question: Shawn explained that every CEO has a different vision or philosophy about the direction of the organization. He knew I had just been named principal, and as far as he was concerned, that was the same as being named the CEO of the school, so he would rely on me for decisions, and wanted to make sure that his plans moving forward aligned with my vision of education in the building.

I had barely been able to articulate a vision during my interview for the position of principal just a few weeks prior to this encounter, and now I was coming to the realization that every decision I made would have a lasting impact on the students entering the building, possibly for years and decades to come. The relationship between my leadership decisions and management through a distributed leadership lens became immediately relevant; his question had not even been presented yet, and I was making myself nervous enough to feel sick to my stomach not knowing whether or not the decision I was about to make should be based on attempting to shift a collective thought process within an entire building, or to maintain stability and the status quo (Spillane et al., 2004). I wanted more than anything to find a way out of the room so I could call one of my supervisors for recommendations, but at that moment the question came.

I pushed the conflicting thoughts out of my mind and focused on the discussion. According to him, the previous principal had made the decision to remove all white boards (like chalk boards, but plastic boards made for use with dry erase markers) and to only include one interactive white board (electronic boards only for use with computers, projectors, and simulated electronic pens) per classroom. The philosophy, he explained, was to require all teachers to utilize the technology, and not to rely on old methods of instruction. I stood listening to him, and realized at that moment that the room had gone silent, and every eye was fixed on me. I had not yet heard a question, so I wondered why the mood had shifted from the men focused on their own work, to now waiting for a response from me. As intelligently as I could, I responded, "So?"

"So," Shawn replied, "we want to know if your philosophy aligns with the previous principal." I thought about it. I thought about establishing routines

surrounding the use of technology in classrooms may have been in place for some time while the previous principal led the school, resulting in the opportunity for innovation in instructional practices. If I ignored the stability created by this decision, I may create an environment where teachers do not understand why the decisions I have made are important to the function of the school or individual class. Considering the varied interpretations of any decision intended to promote change, the legitimacy of the organization under my leadership was at stake with each response I gave (Spillane et al., 2004). While this appeared to be an important issue to resolve with Shawn and the other men in the room, it presented me with a much more serious dilemma: Aligning my philosophy with the previous principal would alienate some of the faculty who were looking for change, while not adopting the philosophies of the previous principal would do the same for another group of teachers. I was in my first no-win situation, and I had not even begun my tenure at the school.

After as much careful consideration as about thirty seconds would allow, I finally responded. "I believe that all forms of technology should be utilized whenever possible. Restricting a teacher to one device, and only being able to use it one at a time, seems like a misuse of instructional time. If we had white boards in the room, couldn't we have multiple students up at boards at the same time, rather than just one at one board?" I waited for the silence to be broken, and then suddenly Shawn replied, "okay." Just as he uttered the words, the men began shifting papers and I could tell that steps were now in motion to change what had previously been planned.

I stopped them quickly, and explained that while my philosophy may be different, I did not feel that I was in a position at that time to make any decisions that

would impact financial considerations, nor specific district thoughts on the subject. I did not know if this was simply a decision from the principal before me, or if this was a mandate from the district to help move teachers in the direction of technology integration; I did not know if this decision would cost the district more money; and I did not know what money we had for this project to begin with. Shawn's reply was reassuring: "don't worry," he stated calmly, "we won't do anything without Roger's approval; we just want to hear your ideas so we know how to move forward on our end. This will change our plans, but more than anything we just wanted to know how you felt about stuff like this." He mentioned Roger Brown, the assistant superintendent in charge of facilities and the bond, which made me even more nervous. How would he react to this decision? I cared about his approval more than many in the district, as I had learned a great deal from him as a mentor during my time as an assistant principal at Alcott middle school, and even before as a teacher.

My first encounter with Roger Brown was during my years as assistant band director at Norman High. I had just completed my first educational law course as part of my master's degree in educational administration at the University of Oklahoma, and at that time felt I had a much better understanding of the law than my immediate supervisor, the head band director, any of the assistant principals at Norman High, the head principal, or any of the members in the superintendents cabinet. With my new-found knowledge, I was quite concerned with the recent refusal by a student to turn in a fundraiser bill of approximately thirty dollars, for the sale of lollipops. Instead of contacting any of those school supervisors, I took it upon myself to contact the district's attorney directly.

I called, and through quite a bit of laughter from his secretary, left a voicemail regarding the situation. Within about ten minutes my cell phone was ringing with an unknown number, and when I answered it I was greeted by a man who introduced himself as Roger Brown, the current director of secondary education. I immediately made the connection and understood how remarkably stupid my decision had been to contact the attorney. Roger was kind and calm, ignoring my frenzied reaction and apologies. He recommended, if I ever had any concerns or questions, that before contacting anyone else, he would be happy to help me, and asked me to take his personal cell phone number down so I could do so. I refused several times, as I tried to explain to him I would never make the same mistake again, but in the calm tone he had begun the conversation with, he urged me to write his number down, and I did.

I had realized how dramatically inappropriate my decision had been in that moment, and how it had probably cost the district unnecessary legal fees for the short phone call with the attorney, but irrespective of that Roger had shown compassion and established himself as one of my most valued mentors in the years to come. His leadership shown in that moment fostered my growth and development as a teacher and leader, while maintaining a climate in which disciplinary action did not dominate instructional issues. This consideration allowed me to continue my path to the principalship, where it easily could have ended possibilities of future administrative opportunities, and as a result distributed leadership was realized (Spillane et al., 2004). I hoped to use these same considerations in the decision regarding technology in the classroom, and allow teachers the opportunity to thrive and innovate while sustaining the established vision of the district.

I replied quickly to Shawn and the other men working in the room that I still wanted to consult Roger about any decisions being made to ensure school plans were aligned with the district. He agreed, and thanked me for the conversation. It was clear to me that Shawn had had experience in leadership shifts before, and I felt confident that he would not change plans drastically without the approval of Roger and the district. It was nice to know that I had forged a community partnership so soon in my tenure, and looked forward to many more meetings with Shawn in the future.

Even before officially setting foot in my office for the first time, I had experienced the surprising nature of organizational structures. Bolman and Deal (2013) describe school leadership as "a world of messes: complexity, ambiguity, value dilemmas, political pressures, and multiple constituencies" (2013, p. 39). These "messes" are evident both at the micro and macro level of inspection: each conversation includes a variety of motivations from all perspectives, and those conversations lead to decisions impacting an entire school or district. Actors within the organizational structure have their own pressures and motivations, and as the leader of the school it was my job to interpret these motivations appropriately and align my responses with not only my ethical purpose, but also the broader district vision (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Spillane et al., 2004).

July 27, 2011: Formation of an Idea

Soon after my initial meeting with the architect, I received a phone call from Katie Fitzgerald, the director of the Center for Children and Families, a local agency. She wanted to meet with me at my convenience to discuss options for utilizing space at Longfellow for an after-school program provided by the agency. I agreed, and our

meeting was set for the afternoon of July 27. Already being confronted with decisions that I knew would impact both the teachers and students at Longfellow, I was nervous about our first encounter, not knowing what decisions would need to be made. As I was quickly realizing, every decision I made would impact a variety of stakeholders, if not all of them, and the weight of the importance of these decisions impacting students was not lost on me.

Gaining partnerships with intermediary organizations such as CCFI could benefit students at Longfellow through "youth-adult partnerships" and lead to positive impacts on teaching and learning in the classroom. Team bonding and leadership development among students, combined with adult partnerships through an intermediary organization, may also encourage participation from adults in the building as sponsors and increase effectiveness of learning in the classroom through those partnerships (Mitra, Sanders, & Perkins, 2010; Mitra, 2008; Rudduck & Flutter, 2000). However, what did "right" decisions focus on in this context?

The easy answer I had learned in school involved what is "right" for students, but I was learning that opinions differ when it comes to what is best for students, notably from the standpoint of those in power. Without consideration of perspectives from multiple groups, a unilateral view of what is best disrupts the organization and development of students (Freire, 1968/2000; Lortie, 2009). The impact decisions have on teachers, parents, administrators, the district, and students varies with each decision, and sometimes a decision that may not have an immediate effect on students will ultimately benefit them in the long term (Spillane et al., 2004).

Katie arrived in my office with Katy Powers, a member of her board of directors. Both women thanked me for meeting with them. They began by welcoming me to the new role, and offered a tiled mural of a lion that several students who currently attended Longfellow had made over the summer in one of their programs. Katie handed me a photograph of the students surrounding the mural from the summer program, and I could tell the pride shown in the students' faces of what they had created for their new principal, and was honored to receive such a gift from them. It was an impressive piece of art, one that still hangs in my office today. Katie then began outlining why she had wanted to meet with me.

For the past ten years, she explained, Longfellow had been a part of an after-school program run by CCFI. The group met a few times a week in a classroom or cafeteria, and involved students and CCFI volunteers building projects, playing games, and working on homework. The program was designed to give students a place to stay in a structured environment while their parents were still at work, and also allowed time for the volunteers and registered counselors to assist the students with issues they were having. She informed me that the focus from CCFI involved central Norman (including several schools in addition to Longfellow) due to the high rate of crime and poverty in the area. She handed me a few brochures outlining what she had just described to me, and I glanced at them as she continued talking.

I looked over at Katy, the board member, and she sat there silent as Katie described her program. Katy immediately noticed my demeanor: we had been long-time friends for several years – my wife had taught four of their children previously at McKinley elementary school. I could tell she wanted to interrupt and ask what I was

thinking, but she was allowing Katie to continue her presentation before speaking. She sensed what I had been thinking since they had arrived: "was this going to be yet another program in the long string of initiatives I had seen as an administrator which involved little time, and little impact to help students in need? Was there more bureaucracy involved in getting students real help, and was this just a 'Band Aid' to keep kids busy before their parents got home?" I had been frustrated as an assistant principal at Alcott middle school with the limitations of providing help to students, and this felt like yet another superficial program, which may look good on paper but had no lasting impact on students or their families. At the time, I viewed students as empty vessels in which I was to infuse knowledge and care to enable them to seek a better life than what was laid before them. I had no intention of listening to their views on what was important or right; it was I who could show them the correct path, based on my experience and understanding of life (Freire, 1968/2000).

I looked back at Katie, and there was an uncomfortable silence. She noticed me glance at Katy, and could tell I was becoming frustrated with the conversation, but she could not decipher why. She paused, continued talking, paused again, and I wondered if she believed I was about to deny her access to Longfellow Middle School. I was the gatekeeper for a program which had been established over ten years prior to my arrival, and the next few moments would determine the future of this program under my supervision. From an organizational standpoint of the creation of an intermediary partnership between the school and CCFI, it would ultimately be my decision as the manager and leader of structures and systems within the school's organization to determine whether or not to allow this partnership to be continued. Maintaining the

long standing relationship with CCFI would, from a managerial standpoint, allow maintenance of the status quo, easing tensions and fostering growth from within the existing structures. Should I disrupt this relationship, it could lead to more substantial gains in the long run, but also limit development (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Howard, 2012; Mitra et al., 2010). I could understand her nervousness, so I decided to interrupt her and express my opinion.

I explained that I was very appreciative of her willingness to accommodate needs of students and families in this community, being born and reared here myself. I felt that CCFI had plenty of positive attributes to help families in crisis. However, I continued, I was unsure if this program had any real lasting impact on students, and asked her for her thoughts on the sustained positive benefits, if any, this program had on children and their families. She agreed that this wasn't the perfect solution, but that it was a measure among many to help where she felt they could help. I replied that I would be more than happy to share any space that she and CCFI needed for the students at Longfellow after school, and I could tell she was immediately relieved. I did not have much faith in the program making a meaningful impact, and she could sense my frustration. She felt more comfortable in the conversation, so she probed me for my thoughts on the matter.

I took advantage of the moment, and began outlining my story beginning with my beliefs as a teacher, then moving into administration at Alcott middle school and the level of frustration I had with being unable to effectively connect students and families with comprehensive services that could impact them positively, and long term. Specifically, I explained, I was tired of watching students in crisis enter the halls of a

school, then suspending them based on their behaviors not aligning to our "rules," and sending them right back into the environment where these behaviors would be reinforced. This cycle of my inability to properly help students, sending them back into an environment where the behaviors were created and nurtured, then getting them back at school, would continue until the student dropped out of school, failed school, was suspended long term, or the student would simply not graduate. I expressed my lack of faith in my and the system's ability to help these students and families, and explained that this after school program, while seemingly positive in concept, would have no lasting impact on what students really needed. I apologized for my passion in the matter, but told them I was sick of being unable to help. What I didn't realize during my story was that Katie had moved to the edge of her seat, leaning closer as I was speaking to her. She was visibly excited, and was waiting for me to take a breath so she could respond.

She agreed with everything I had said, and shared similar frustrations. From her perspective, this was the only way she could impact students positively, with the limitations of the system in schools. She wanted to do something, and knew that these measures would not help long term, but wanted to do what little she could with the hope it would help some students. She asked what I had in mind, and I did not hesitate to tell her. "What we need is a full time program, eight hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. We need qualified counselors working with students on a regular basis, and their families. We need services surrounding the needs of students whether they be health related, social, or emotional. It must be comprehensive, and sustained beyond their years here at Longfellow."

Her reply surprised me as she stated, "Let's do it." She committed to providing counselors full time. What we needed was space, and I told her that wouldn't be a problem. While it wasn't the greatest space, that empty kitchen wasn't being used, and we could refurbish it to meet our needs. Finally, I thought, progress was being made on a problem that everybody was either unable or unwilling to attack!

We agreed that the clinic would be ready and open by January of the next year, and my excitement was boiling to a frenzy. I can't recall specifically, but I'm fairly certain the meeting ended in hugs and dances – we were going to change the world, right there at Longfellow. What little did I know of the issues to arise over the next three years. Acting alone and making decisions unilaterally not only would create a climate of oppression for the students being impacted by decisions, but also, by not considering the structural aspects of the school's organization, as well as partnerships with intermediary organizations and community influences, I would create conflicts that could have been avoided with better understanding and consideration of forces acting with and against each other (Mitra et al., 2010; Watson, 2012).

August 1, 2011: Plans Change

By the end of our meeting, the three of us had decided how to proceed. I would contact some district-level personnel to begin the process on my side. I knew attempting to implement a program like this would require a great deal of support from the district, as well as changing regulations or even board policy to support a program within the school day. I began by visiting with Justin Milner, the director of special services. He had been somebody whom I had contacted often while at Alcott for advice, and I knew he had successfully implemented a sustained program district wide

over the past several years and would have insights on how to begin the process on my end. His demeanor was consistent: calm, assured, and knowledgeable. I felt that if I was going to sway superintendent's cabinet to allow the creation of a program like we had conceived, it would take assistance from as many as possible, and beginning with him was my best bet. Careful consideration of whom to work with first in this initiative was important to achieve the goal of a successful implementation (Lortie, 2009; Watson, 2012).

Coordinating efforts in and around change within an organization requires consideration of multiple contextual variables. Bolman and Deal (2013) describe several models, including teams with one boss, multiple bosses in dual authority, simple hierarchy with one manager leading another, a circle network with sequential information moving from one person to another, and finally an all-channel network, where communication is spread throughout multiple connections. Justin was a supervisor in the district, but he was not my immediate supervisor. I interpreted his role through an all-channel network described by Bolman and Deal, while he also held a supervisory role above myself and other principals. His abilities to interconnect with other managers and leaders within the district would help my cause: by communicating with him, he could then advocate for me on a larger scale among other district leaders. However, communicating with him first also put me in a precarious position; I was unaware of the relationship between his role and that of my immediate supervisor, Nick Migliorino, the director of Secondary Education. If the model was hierarchical, it would mean that I was jumping a level in a line of managers, and that could cause

friction with Nick, as well as between Nick and district leaders. However, predisposed to past mentorship, my connecting with Justin was the most prudent choice at the time.

Our first meeting was brief. I met him in his office and offered my desire to move forward with an initiative of bringing outside agencies into the school building to work with students and families on a regular basis as the need occurred. He asked if I was working on the creation of a community school as an extension of the PBIS model, Positive Behavior Intervention Systems, the program he had brought to Norman Public Schools several years prior. At the time, I had only heard of what they were, without many details.

I explained that I had heard of community schools, but did not know much about them, so he provided me with some details and directed me toward some areas, with Tulsa as one model I should look at. I recalled a class with Dr. Gregg Garn from the University of Oklahoma I had taken where a representative from the Tulsa Community School had visited and explained to the class what the model included. I told Justin that while I appreciated that model, from what I could remember it was only providing specific services to individual schools: one site it would have a health clinic, while another would have a garden or other service. What I wanted for Norman was different: I wanted a central location where all services were available in a hub, allowing parents and students to arrive and receive any service or product they needed. Justin reminded me that in order for a model to be sustained and ingrained into the culture of a school or district, it must start small, be tested for effectiveness, then built upon based on data and results. I remember thinking at the time that my desire was to be better, and to be different, and I disregarded his urging to begin with a small portion before developing.

What we needed was a full implementation of the complete model at the beginning in order to be truly effective, and that was my mission to accomplish. I would not be proven wrong.

My desire to compete for a large share of resources within the organization of the district would prove futile. Bolman and Deal assert a political perspective of organizational theory where the "perspective, goals, structure, and policies emerge from an ongoing process of bargaining and negotiation among major interest groups" (p. 204, 2013). I considered myself to be a major influencer in the political organization of the district, and was blind to the larger-scale issues being negotiated at levels above my sphere of influence or power. The finite amount of resources available to the district must be dispersed based on need determined by district leaders, the board of education, community influences, and other political groups vying for portions of the resource pool. Outcomes are necessary in perpetuating success with the organization as well, and the unknown outcomes and potentially controversial or divisive aspects of this venture would hinder its development throughout the entire process. The organizational dynamics surrounding initiatives are more positively influenced by those with expected positive outcomes, leaving other initiatives at a lower priority from the district's perspective. I felt the implementation of this would be substantially beneficial, but without evidence to support any positive outcomes in this particular circumstance, the resources available to the district could be better utilized in other projects and initiatives with more reliable outcomes. At this juncture, these concepts were unknown to me, but very clear to those supervising me, including Justin.

Justin was clear on one idea: I must tread carefully moving forward, and research ideas before presenting them to our superintendent. If handled the presentation incorrectly, the idea would fail before beginning. He also recommended I speak with Nick Migliorino, the current director of secondary education, so that he would be involved in the process. Justin was more keenly aware of the hierarchical model utilized in the district than I and had recognized the need to include all appropriate parties in discussions so as not to create conflict or strife (Bolman & Deal, 2013). I knew that if this facility were to open by January, we would need to move fast, so I began setting up meetings as quickly as I could. My first meeting would take place just a week later with Katie Fitzgerald, concerning how to bring in various agencies to begin planning. This meeting would be the first meeting concerning the political nature of various agencies in Norman.

August 9, 2011: Aligning Agencies

Katie met me at Longfellow, and began by outlining the various agencies in Norman and their relationship to one another. I described to her the model I wished to incorporate at Longfellow, as well as the information I had gained from Justin a week before. The model, I explained, would be more beneficial in Norman because it would include all forms of support under one roof, rather than separate locations where parents and students may not have access, nor wish to travel to when seeking help.

This belief stemmed from previous experience with families in schools where I had been, where I had watched parents refuse to seek help outside the school. Not taking the time to investigate reasons behind these refusals, I had formed my own opinions as to why they would not seek help. I postulated that the parents felt trapped

and unable to break free from the imposing system around them as those in power continued to impose their beliefs about what would benefit them and act upon those without consultation (Dewey, 1916; Freire, 1968/2000). I believed that their lack of hope left no opportunity for transformation to free themselves from this confinement, but lacking the ability (or desire) to form true partnerships and learn the reasons of their refusals, I positioned myself as another player of power in the system – ultimately interpreted as another oppressor of an unavoidable future. Partnering with intermediary organizations to better serve these families was noble in motivation, but the lack of equal engagement and understanding would only continue to foster conflict and negative results (Howard, 2012; Lortie, 2009; Mitra et al., 2010; Watson, 2012).

Katie felt that there would be no problem in CCFI, United Way, and LoveWorks working in coordination with one another toward the development of a community school model. The Center for Children and Families could bring counseling and case management, United Way could recruit and align multiple support agencies in town, and LoveWorks could provide volunteers and tutoring. We would need funding, and United Way may be a funding partner in that venture. LoveWorks and CCFI could partner in this development, and she explained that the missing link with services in Norman had been a single entity or person to be able to bring all the available agencies to a single table to work out the details of what a joint venture would be. When left alone, these agencies act independently, and at times foster competition for funding, resources, and clients. She recommended a place, possibly Longfellow, where all the agencies could come together under one roof to discuss the future of a joint partnership.

The notion of agency politics caused me concern. I explained to Katie that I hoped my role would include the educational aspect of the community school, and that I would like to find somebody with knowledge of community agencies and politics to be able to work with these entities more effectively. She replied that while it would be beneficial to have somebody in that area lead the initiative, it was my passion for the project that would drive us forward, and that I would need to hold that responsibility. I shrugged the thought off, thinking she was incorrect in her assumption. I had neither the desire nor the ability to connect outside agencies, and I did not want the responsibility of the success or failure of the implementation of this plan.

We have partner agencies in schools, but they serve more as an avenue for volunteers or financial support. The types of connections we were discussing here were much deeper and would require a great deal of working knowledge and experience in the business world to navigate. Bolman and Deal (2013) argue the necessity of an understanding of multiple organizational structures to create positive change. As they note, an effective manager must "understand that any event or process can serve several purposes and that participants are often operating from different views of reality" (p. 321, 2013). Intermediary organizations and their managers involved with the development of a community school would all have varied views of what should be included, and my lack of understanding of their motivations would make me an ineffective leader at the macro level involving all contributors. Important variables outlined by Bolman and Deal (2013) include "motivation, technical constraints, uncertainty, scarcity, conflict, and whether an individual is operating from the top down or from the bottom up." I had no working knowledge of the organizational structures of

any of the groups we were attempting to partner with, nor the specific variables which would influence their motivations and thoughts concerning the development of the project. I could not predict how agencies would act or react, and so be unable to instinctively "reframe" roles or procedures to benefit the entire process. It appeared at this juncture to be an argument I would be unable to win, so we continued with our discussion.

I outlined the counseling model currently being utilized by Norman Public Schools. Agencies could apply through the district's central office for access to the students, and if approved, could coordinate their services with parents. I explained to her as I had learned over the years, this process was difficult or impossible for some parents to navigate, and I had many times seen counseling options unavailable to students.

Katie explained that policies moving forward would need to be created in order to protect agencies and the school district from liability. We would need to clearly define parameters under which services could be offered within the boundaries of the school, and she suggested that only licensed therapists, counselors, or other professionals be allowed to participate in the community school. I agreed with the idea, but knew that these policies would become exclusionary for some entities such as LoveWorks, which relied heavily on volunteers to provide mentorships for students and leadership development. I realized that these policies could create conflict when developing our community school (I was still unaware of what that term meant at the time), and again expressed my desire for somebody with more knowledge in the subject to work with agencies to gain partnerships. I felt that agencies like LoveWorks had

much to offer, and didn't want to limit their inclusion in the development of our plan, but also knew we needed to define on what terms we would allow such inclusion, or we would find ourselves required to allow almost any entity into our schools, which may quickly get out of hand.

This led to a consideration of the focused role of the community school at Longfellow. What were we really trying to accomplish? At this point, with my lack of knowledge of what a community school was, I had only my intuition to guide me, and my answer was simple: I wanted a community school to provide *everything*. I described to Katie a student who had shown up at my previous school, Alcott, on a Monday morning, looking exhausted from the weekend. The student had no supplies, and he informed us that his father had been imprisoned over the weekend, car impounded, and all his supplies including books and homework were in the car when his father was taken. I explained to Katie that in a time like that, we should have a place on campus to provide clothes, supplies, toiletries, and counseling that could help the student in this crisis. She wanted to provide a more focused approach, at least at the beginning of the process, so she asked for a more narrow definition of what we could begin with in order to gather data for further exploration.

Again I was confronted with another professional urging me to back off from my "big picture" and narrow the focus. My belief was that by doing so, we would be doing exactly what we had been doing for decades before: splitting services across the district, laying out a complicated and unmanageable path for those with little access or support to be able to traverse. I still could not understand why we could not build the entire project now, so I could prove to the community what was really needed.

My belief of what was "needed," grounded in personal experience and one-sided perceptions, continued to drive my desire to create what I believed was the perfect one-stop-shop of services in order to provide students beneficial support. The varied structures of agencies, and their many layers of services, would inevitably cause a great deal of confusion and ineffective models of implementation, which Katie had learned either through experience or education. Bolman and Deal (2013) describe these issues in a complex world of leadership styles and organizational structures. Immediately forcing inclusion of anything and everything, we would also be engaging effective and ineffective leaders and managers, involving multiple frameworks of leadership styles including structural, human resource, political, and symbolic. Understanding and partnering with one or two leaders by position or power would be difficult to navigate, and bringing in any agency willing to participate would be catastrophic to the successful implementation of this idea. Unknowingly, I was inviting inevitable failure for the project, and Katie was one of many players in this drama attempting to save me from dooming the project before it got off the ground.

Katie recommended we let survey data guide our services offered. She would aid in a needs assessment, and gather data based on behaviors, attendance, poverty in the area, substance abuse, and other indicators. She stated that we could incorporate many levels of services throughout the week: on some days we could offer medical aid, on others counseling, but with all services we would need qualified professionals, not individuals with passion but no qualifications. She then laid out some ideas for talking points with the superintendent when we pitched the idea: Establish clear parameters of what we need and want regarding the needs of the school and immediate community;

fact-finding information: exploring other communities such as Tulsa which have similar initiatives for frameworks to work from; have data from a needs assessment on what components would best serve Longfellow and the surrounding community; partner with established entities to work together under one service including counseling, medical, clothing, shelter, financial assistance, and others; and finally be able to speak about bridging the gap to involve multi-levels of intervention utilizing our current PBIS structure to enable a community school hub to proactively address the needs of students. By aligning this initiative to an already established program in Norman (PBIS), we could work on expanding the program, not start from scratch. I had a good place to start from our meeting, so I set off to begin a proposal that I could use when engaging partners and the superintendent.

As soon as I returned to school, I recruited a counselor in the building, Michelle Sutherlin, to help with the formation of our proposal, as I was realizing quickly that before we met with more agencies it would help to have some kind of formalized plan with us to share. I reflected on the use of "needs assessment" by both Katie and Justin during previous discussions, and while I continued to believe that a needs assessment was unnecessary, providing data to stakeholders and grant funding agencies would be required for development of the center we were trying to build.

From my perspective, I had all the answers we needed for an assessment: I was the educational leader of the school, and my determination based on focused intuition was that students and their families needed help, and I was there to provide them the help and services they required. I did not feel a specific analysis of crime, poverty, behavior, attendance, grade, and other indicators was necessary; it was my judgment

alone that would provide ample support for such an initiative. My role was to provide the impetus for action, where others could or would not previously. My intentions could ultimately lead to my imposition on those being served as tyrannical or fanatical, both in the structural and symbolic leadership realms (Bolman & Deal, 2013). The imposition of my beliefs upon the students and families in a paternalistic view would not allow students to grow and develop as independent thinkers, free of those around them forcing thoughts and ideals upon them (Freire, 1968/2000).

Michelle had taken a position as school counselor at Longfellow before I was hired. We grew up together in Norman; I remember looking up to her as a young student growing up. I always perceived her to be a leader of student organizations and a strong representative of student councils. In my youth, I remember seeing her as one of the "cool" kids, and I could only hope to be a part of whatever organization she was affiliated with, and, as my recollection would have it, leading. She had a quality I have always found endearing in others. She also possessed a skill, which would help in this project: she had taught journalism at the University of Oklahoma, and was editor-in-chief of the *Oklahoma Daily* and *Sooner Yearbook*. Recalling Justin's advice on the proper and improper ways to initiate a program, I asked her to help with the admonition that this would be a confidential matter. Time was a limited resource at our disposal with the January opening date just a few short months away, so she set immediately to work.

Her questions on writing the proposal were direct: what needs would we be looking at? Who was the intended audience? What was our ultimate goal? And the most important at the time: What was it to be called? I was unclear as to the

requirements of a needs assessment, so I guessed we would be looking at crime rate which we could get from Katie, poverty rate derived from our free and reduced numbers at school, behavior analysis, grade analysis, and any other indicators she believed were pertinent to the scope of our project. The intended audience included local agencies and district leadership. Our ultimate goal was to open the community school in January, but what to call it?

This took careful consideration and thought. If we named it a community school, I knew that the name could bring about specific responses from agency leaders and district leaders. But I did not know the precise definition or attributes of a community school, and I did not want to provide an easy ground on which those whose support was vital might decline to be involved. After considering, we thought that naming it a "community center" would be the most appropriate, as it kept the main function clear, while not raising undue emotions or reactions. There was still much to be done by January, so she set off to create the proposal, and I set up more meetings with agencies.

Next on the list was a meeting with the K20 Center at the University of Oklahoma, led by Gregg. I was hoping to forge a relationship between Norman Public Schools and the University, and thought that the K20 Center would be an ideal place to begin investigating the use of students or employees at the university as part of the center. I contacted Justin and asked for him to join me, and he agreed. We met prior to the meeting with Gregg, and Justin was very clear on one idea moving forward: this was to be an "exploratory" venture, with absolutely no commitments from us whatsoever in the creation or implementation of a community center or community school. It was

clear that Justin had met with other district leaders, and I was again reminded of his initial thought on the correct way to implement a new project in the school district. While I expressed my annoyance at the bureaucracy involved in such decisions, he was direct in his instructions. I remember saying to him at the time, "This is the problem with education, we think too much and we never act." His laughter still echoes in my mind today as I now realize more fully the impact of change on institutions.

September 13, 2011: The Business of Action

We arrived at the K20 Center, and as we exited the car and moved toward the entrance I began picturing what the community school would look like at Longfellow. The open front foyer of the K20 Center was inviting and included a large screen providing guests with information about the university and center. I envisioned the entrance to the community center, bright and colorful, with numerous LCD screens inviting students and families to the various services provided by the center. The stairs leading up to the offices we were visiting transformed to stairs leading to counselors' offices in my mind, where students could be led with their families for help. Down the hall could be the basketball courts, where licensed therapists could work with students in a comfortable environment, and around the corner could be a learning center where adult education classes could be housed under the direction of the K20, or whoever wanted to take part in it. No idea was too large, and all could be realized if I stuck to my intuition with tenacity to ensure its success. With the rapid succession of meetings in the prior few weeks and more I was sure to come, I was finally defying what all had failed before me to accomplish. It was I alone who could bring a sense of community back to education, and break the cycle of poverty, creating a better life for students.

Bringing community into schools has been an issue for many decades. The holistic approach to student development both in and out of the home has been neglected due to issues in and around capital growth of the child, as well as social and economic structures leaving communities with limited resources to provide assistance for students' social, educational, and psychological development (Adams, 2010; Bourdieu, 1986, Coleman; 1987). These ideas are presented more thoroughly in chapter five, and the theories surrounding why communities have been separated from the school setting were not known by me at the time. It was my intent to drive forward with my thoughts alone, without an informed knowledge of historical significance pertaining to student development or experience to navigate the process effectively.

We met in a conference room, where a large wood table occupied most of the space. Plush white chairs surrounded the table, and Dr. Gregg Garn and Dr. Jean Cate, one of my former professors, joined us. Gregg opened the meeting by getting straight to questions: How do we meet social and behavioral health issues so students can learn? How do we guide students on a pathway so they will be able to make choices to break through generational poverty or neglect? What information do you have to support the need at your school, or in Norman Public Schools? With the recurring themes of questioning by professionals around me, I started developing a sense of what was needed in this exploration of implementing a community school.

In the previous several years of attempting to help students in need, there was never a shortage of those who agreed with the judgment that the system was broken and could not provide what students and families needed. What was becoming apparent in these meetings, however, was the difficulty in *how* we addressed these problems.

Gregg had outlined a process: identify the need, diagnose the problem, and try to find a solution that meets the needs of the problem. At this point, unfortunately, I did not even possess the knowledge to define the problem, so I attempted to wade through answers in a vague and general manner, hoping to still gain a partnership with the university. His responses made me uneasy, as he probed deeper into attempting to determine the problem at hand. He asked if technology from the K20 were to be integrated into the community center, would it allow for students to be able to thrive in the educational setting for those who normally would not benefit? Was this a need for elementary, middle, or high school? Was this a true need at all? The only inference I could draw on at the time was that other participants at the meeting preferred to move the center away from my school at Longfellow. I had no interest in developing a community school away from Longfellow; I was the one driving this initiative, and it needed to be at my school. If it were to provide a service to a need elsewhere, somebody else could drive the implementation as far as I was concerned.

Gregg and Jean then urged me to research similar models across the country as well as abroad. I responded that I had researched models already (which was not entirely false), and that while models like Tulsa seemed to include needed resources for specific sites, I was more interested in providing a full and comprehensive model under one roof. Both Gregg and Jean again asked if that served the specific need of the school and community, and I did not have an answer to their question. They provided steps to move forward after the meeting: research more specific needs of Longfellow and Norman Public Schools; research other models similar to the one I was hoping to implement; gain information from crime reports, health risk data both for Longfellow

and the surrounding community, and develop a specific plan to move forward. Feeling a little defeated, I left the meeting knowing I needed to regroup and finish our proposal before setting up any more meetings. I had few answers for the questions I continued to receive, and wanted to be prepared for the future.

November 4, 2011: The First Draft

A little over a month later we had our first working proposal. Time was running out to open the doors in January, and I still had not yet gained district support of the initiative. After several meetings with Justin and Nick regarding the impending opening, it was becoming more evident that the January date was not going to become a reality. Our needs assessment was focused in the first few pages of the proposal, and included crime, attendance, and poverty information. We argued that the community center would best be housed at Longfellow due to its central location in the city, as well as demographic data surrounding the school indicating poverty lines and crime rates. The proposal stated:

> According to Norman Police Department crime statistics, 46 percent of crimes in Norman come from a one-mile radius around Wilson Elementary School and Kennedy Elementary School. Wilson Elementary is a feeder school and Kennedy Elementary is in close proximity to Longfellow, as well.
>
> In the first quarter at Longfellow, 45 suspensions were issued to 33 students. Eight of those suspensions were three days or more. All totaled, students lost 165.5 days of instruction in the classroom the first quarter because they were suspended from school.

The behavior causing these suspensions included: 2 fights, 2 suspensions due to possession of drug paraphernalia, 11 suspensions that were of a physical nature (biting, scratching, shoving, racking, depantsing, etc.). There were 5 suspensions due to threats, two suspensions due to bullying, five suspensions due to theft, four suspensions due to disrespect of an adult, and two suspensions for other reasons.

Already in the second quarter, there have been two suspensions, one of which was due to possession of drugs carrying a 45-day suspension.

Absences and tardies are other issues preventing our students from learning. Not including suspensions, students had 1,086.6 days absent in the first quarter, and 274.9 of those absences were unexcused. Students also received 1,243 tardies in the first quarter alone.

Another factor making Longfellow a unique location to host the Community Center is the number of families living at or near the poverty line near our campus. Currently, 50 percent of our student body is on Free or Reduced Lunch. (Longfellow, 2011)

We felt that this data supported our specific need for the community center, and also validated the location for its placement. I sent the proposal to both Justin and Nick for review, and felt ready to set up our next meeting, which we had selected to be with another existing partner agency: the United Way. Now armed with more evidence to support a need, I felt confident that we would be able to better articulate our vision to the leadership of the United Way and make significant progress toward opening the center within the next few months. I asked Michelle Sutherlin to attend the meeting

with me, and asked her to fill Justin's role of moderator, to ensure I maintained the appropriate level of restraint when exploring options for the future. We needed to make it very clear to all agencies that we were not implementing a community center or school, only seeking ideas and options in an exploratory fashion. I did not feel confident I could do that alone, so I wanted to make sure somebody was with me to help guide my conversation.

December 12, 2011: United Way

Kristin Collins, then the president of the United Way of Norman, invited us to her office, which was located in an office building on the west side of town. We entered the door, and made our way to the back office. Diane Murphree, the director of community impact at United Way, joined us for the meeting as well. I knew Diane from school: she was a teacher at Norman High School when I was a student there, and her husband, who was now the Social Studies Curriculum Coordinator for the district, was also one of my teachers. I felt that these strong ties with community leaders would only help my mission to open the community center at Longfellow, and that leveraging these relationships would help speed the process. The inclusion of intermediary organizations in a meaningful way can bring positive effects to student well-being within the school (Mitra et al., 2010), and organizing these agencies in an all-channel network design would allow for the flow of communication between all stakeholders and keep momentum high (Watson, 2012).

I offered to share our proposal draft, with the understanding that it was still exploratory in nature and nothing was set in stone. Kristin and Diane immediately showed excitement at the idea of creating such a partnership with Norman Public

Schools, and both agreed that there was a need for the students and families in Norman. According to Kristin, we should engage families with incentives to become involved to take part in their child's education, health-care needs, and other needs as he or she grew up. She made a very important observation, one that I would not fully understand for several years: she stated that by partnering with the school system, other agencies would need to create services that students and families truly needed; in her experience the creation of services that others think the community needs ends up being futile wastes of time. Families and students will seek out services that they need, so we would need to make sure to provide what the families need, not what we think they need. The results of the latter philosophy would ultimately lead to negative results, bringing about more feelings of oppression by those involved, but at this time I was motivated by my beliefs only (Freire, 1968/2000).

Kristin then began outlining the agencies we could look to partner with to begin the development of this center. She listed several current business-in-education partners, and recommended that we form a steering committee to begin the process. In her experience, the more agencies you bring to the table at once, the more competing thoughts and ideas you have, so it would be important to bring together a few select agencies to create requirements for the center, and then bring other agencies along as needed.

Before I could express my concern about allowing into this process, at its early stages, every agency that wanted to participate, as well as my conviction that I should not be the one guiding the process due to my lack of knowledge of steering committees, partners, and political issues in and around the formation of a center like this, she

moved quickly to the problem of funding. She recommended we seek assistance from Katie Fitzgerald, and try to line up major donors beyond her. Kristin and Diane were not aware that Katie had been a part of this process from the beginning. I did not believe this was the appropriate time to share that information, so I stayed silent, but made note that in her suggestion about where else I could seek financial assistance Kristin was by implication guiding me away from the United Way as a funding source. I wondered at the time if this was going to be a recurring theme in my exploration: agencies may be willing to partner but unable or unwilling to provide financial assistance to make the center a reality.

She then outlined the process and need for a short term and long term business plan, and at this time I expressed my interest in not running or guiding any specifics on agency partnerships, planning development, or implementation. I stated I only wanted it to be done, so that I could continue to do my job as principal and use services from the center to help students in the building. We needed experts in the community to run that part of the process; the last person I felt they needed was a principal with little or no experience in community relations. Her reaction was startling to me, as she quickly replied that if I did not lead this effort, it would never happen. She argued it was my passion that would need to drive this forward, and without it, services would continue to be divergent across the district, and not meet the needs of students and families in the manner I felt necessary.

January 4, 2012: Norman Regional Hospital

The January 1st opening date came and went. With the school district out for winter break for a few weeks, I could not make much headway toward gaining support

from the superintendent, but as Justin and Nick had reminded me, we did not have enough exploration done yet to form a comprehensive model of what we were proposing to implement at Longfellow, so there was no need to invite the superintendent yet. I set a meeting with Paula Price, the Director of Health Promotion at Norman Regional Hospital, in hopes of gaining another community partner in the development process. By this time I was comfortable "sticking to the script," so I offered to visit with her alone without Justin or another member of the staff with me. I met with her in a conference room at the hospital, began by showing her our proposal, and asked her for any thoughts or input she had.

With the hospital in such close proximity to Longfellow, she believed one hurdle would be defending the need for a center with health services within a block from a health system. I explained that students and families, in my experience, would not venture beyond the walls of the school to seek services, but when she asked what data I had to support my claim, I had none. She agreed that this could be an issue for families with little or no access to systems of care, but in order to defend my claim, I would need supporting evidence, especially if I was looking for financial assistance from foundations, the hospital, or donors.

Another concern she expressed was the possible reaction of other doctors with established practices within the health system. How would doctors, including general practitioners and pediatricians, feel when we offered services on site for health related services they were already providing? Would this reduce their case load and revenue? She indicated that stepping on the "wrong toes" could mean a quick end to this idea, so she felt we should move carefully through that aspect of the development. She

proposed perhaps a combination of services, including the health department, to provide dietitians and nurses for continuing health education, and recommended I speak with them about the possibility. There were also services already provided through the health system with continuing education for families that could be extended to the school setting.

I had not considered what ramifications a creation of a community center would have on the surrounding health professionals before speaking with Paula. Competition, or perceived competition, was the last idea I wanted to convey as I waded through gaining partnerships in the community. From my perspective, these students and parents had not been receiving health services, so why would doctors or medical professionals feel threatened by this center? Perhaps providing them services at the school site would take away some existing patients, as convenience would trump preexisting relationships with doctors. While my purpose remained to serve the needs of students at the school site, I still had little evidence to support some claims I was making (specifically regarding health needs), and I was not considering controversies, divisiveness, or other unintended negative consequences it might have on other agencies, their interactions with each other, and with our proposal (Howard, 2012; Lortie, 2009; Mitra et al., 2012).

January 4, 2012: Brian Karnes and Health for Friends

While reviewing notes from meetings, I came across a name that had been brought up on several occasions: Brian Karnes. I had learned that he led the Health for Friends organization, but I was not sure what that agency provided, where it was located, nor how his services could integrate with our vision. I was still exploring as

many options as possible, so I set an appointment with him on the morning of January 4, and he met me in my office. Upon our first encounter, his youthful appearance surprised me: he was comfortably dressed in slacks and a polo shirt, and confident in his demeanor. By this time I was used to delivering my "pitch," so I started immediately into the brief history of identifying our problem, outlined our need, and expressed our desire to form lasting partnerships with community agencies in order to serve students at Longfellow and in Norman Public Schools more effectively. He listened, and smiled through most of my initial monologue.

When I had completed, he had just one question, "Have you ever heard of a FQHC?" I replied that I had not, and he laughed while explaining to me that I had conjured up in my mind what people have been working on for decades: Federally Qualified Health Centers, aimed to serve the needs of the public in a single location. He then described briefly his development of Health for Friends, and the hurdles he overcame through the process. He agreed with Paula that developing services that may compete with similar services currently provided may cause some friction within the community, as he had experienced the same while creating Health for Friends.

In the beginning, he explained, most of the medical community dismissed his efforts as futile and paid little attention to him. However, as he established his practice and started gaining patients, he saw some push back from the larger medical community. It took some time, he explained, to convince them that they were really not competing with each other, only working simultaneously to provide services to a variety of demographics. Most patients of doctors would not normally consider attending a FQHC, so his services were focused on a group of individuals that before then had not

established a “home” doctor. It was also his opinion that individuals being served under Medicare and Medicaid were considered more of a “headache” for most of the medical community, but he wanted a center where those with or without insurance could receive quality health care.

I felt comfortable enough during our conversation to dive into my full dream of creating a multi-level facility capable of holding numerous services and programs. I went so far as to state that I expected the surgery wing to be completed within the next three or so years, which got a hearty laugh from Brian. While he believed the surgery wing may be slightly out of reach, he was completely sold on the idea, and wanted to help however he could. I reminded him that this was an exploratory mission at this point, but wanted to meet with him again soon to continue our conversation and professional partnership.

Armed with information from CCFI, United Way, Norman Regional, Health for Friends, and our needs assessment, I felt ready to approach Justin and Nick to set a meeting with the superintendent, Dr. Joe Siano. I presented the information gained from the previous meetings, as well as my proposal, and they agreed it was time to seek guidance from him. I felt this would be the turning point in the development process; as soon as I gained his support, I would be free to publicize the creation of the community center, seek funding, and begin building immediately.

The meeting was set for two days later, January 6. We invited Sharon Heatly, the Director of Guidance and Counseling for Norman Public Schools, to attend. The meeting was set with Dr. Siano, Justin, Sharon, and myself. I was excited to finally be seeing the results I had wanted, and I knew this meeting would be the pivotal moment

needed to move forward. If only I had known prior to the meeting how catastrophic it would end up.

January 6, 2012: Dr. Siano and the Parking Garage

My first encounter with Dr. Siano was approximately twelve years ago, during my first year as assistant band director at Norman high school. I had taught three years previously at Irving middle school, and had joined my longtime friend and former teacher Jim Meiller at Norman High. We were at a football game on duty, the band already on the field performing their half time show. We had invited Dr. Siano, in his first year as superintendent, to join us on the field to play saxophone, an instrument we had learned he played. Jim pointed to him on the track, and I saw him waiting on the sideline for his cue to join the band on the field.

My audacity took over and I waltzed over toward him, ignoring the advice from Jim to stay away. As I approached, he turned and glanced my way. His piercing stare was one holding a great deal of experience, confidence, and thoughtfulness. He was slightly shorter than me, well dressed, and held himself with authority. I introduced myself clumsily, and offered to walk him to his spot on the field while carrying his instrument. I could tell that he found my introduction humorous, but probably could not ignore my offer (as much as he would have liked to), so he agreed. I remember thinking at the time that he had a kind way about him, but wondered what impact one man could really have in a system as large as Norman Public Schools. I had no direct interactions with him or his decisions; I felt he was more of a figure head than an integral part of the culture of Norman Public Schools.

As I gained experience over the next few years, I learned much more about the organizational structure of school administration in Norman, and my respect for him grew tremendously. His philosophies were provocative, clearly focused on the students in Norman above all else. His decisions all centered on the impact they would have on student growth. Through my first five years as an assistant principal at Alcott I gained even more insight into his values and leadership style in administrative meetings and various committees. In all circumstances where I encountered him, he continued to show prudent non-action when needed, and thoughtful, experienced decision-making. I have tried to model my career on his abilities, and truly revere his ability to move a district this size forward in such an honest and caring manner.

He entered the conference room where we were seated and took his seat at the end of the table. I had assumed Justin would take the lead during the meeting, as he had the most senior position after Dr. Siano. I began by thanking the group for taking the time to meet, and looked at Justin to begin the meeting. Dr. Siano looked back at me, and without wasting any time, stated, "Peter, this is your passion. I want to hear from you." I flashed back to Justin, who only sat stoically, waiting for me to proceed.

I realized that it was now on my shoulders to present our plan, so I began with my history as assistant principal at Alcott and the problems I encountered with services being available to students and their families. I paused several times as I outlined the historical context for the presentation of this proposal to wait for questions, but Dr. Siano remained silent, listening to my story. I continued, including descriptions of meetings with the various agencies in Norman, and ended with the present where we were at that meeting. I stated that my next steps, with his approval, would be to create a

committee involving several agencies, bring them to the table, and appoint a director of this facility to move forward with the initiative.

His next words I will remember for my career. He began by stating, "Peter, when I hired you I knew you were a leader of tremendous potential, with great passion in what you do. I want to hire leaders in this district who show passion for unique thoughts and proposals, and I value your opinion greatly. Whatever the outcome of this venture, whether it be an approval or not, I want you to know how much I appreciate your passion for this project." I focused sharply on his words, "or not." It already sounded like this meeting was coming to a close, rather than moving forward with an approval. He continued before I could say anything. "First, you will head this initiative, there will be no appointed 'director.' This is your passion, and needs to be led by you." I tried to interrupt him to express my belief that my lack of knowledge of the political nature of community agencies would only hinder our progress, but he appeared to already know what I was going to say and moved forward by saying, "regardless of your expertise or belief of leadership abilities in the community, people will respond to you, not an appointed member able to navigate agencies. Besides, I have no interest in utilizing district dollars to fund such a position, so it's you by default." Regardless of my internal objection, it appeared we were moving in the right direction, so I stayed silent.

He then shifted his focus to details. "I can see by your needs assessment that you have some data indicating the benefits of services, but what specifically are you envisioning being utilized through this center?" I replied that I felt that any service that was needed by a student or family would be available, on site. Ignoring my reply, he

asked again, but this time referred a specific service: "Will there be preventative services provided? Teen pregnancy?" I was not prepared for such a question, and I glanced at Justin for assistance. His silent response was clear: this was my show. I replied, "Of course." He leaned forward in his chair and explained, "Let me tell you why this will not work. Selling the notion of a center, clinic, or school located at Longfellow already brings about a perception that students at Longfellow *need* services not provided elsewhere, which may be interpreted by some community members in a negative way. I have no intention of isolating one school in this district in such a manner. We must also understand that while preventative services may be important, we must also be willing to weigh the consequences of entering into a public debate of services, and possibly end up losing the entire project because of a rift created within the community." I thought for a moment and responded that I did not feel it was necessary to include preventative services, if it meant the possibility of not being able to move forward.

He then leaned back and brought his hand to his forehead, appearing confused. "Peter, I can tell you have this entire space worked out in your head, but I need more details of what you are thinking about, either written down, or clearly explained to me. This obviously is going to take funds; who is going to pay for this? Will this be a joint partnership between the district and agencies? If so, who pays for what? What specific services will be provided? What are our short and long term goals? To start, how much money do you think we will need?"

He was correct: I did have the entire facility mapped out in my head. I knew every door, every hallway, every room. I knew what employees were already working

there, I knew that every service and product needed would be available: counselors, social workers, clothing, supplies, health services, eye care, dental, mental health providers, everything. I had thought of how much money the needed facility was going to cost, so I responded quickly, "I figure we can squeeze about twenty million from the next bond election and that should cover it."

Simultaneously Dr. Siano burst into laughter and Justin lowered his head shaking it side to side. I was unsure of what was going on from either side of the table, but one aspect was clear: I should not have indicated that we needed twenty million dollars for the facility and services. Dr. Siano asked, "What are you expecting to spend twenty million dollars on?" And before I could interpret Justin's stare to stop my flow of absurdity, I responded, "Well, we'll need a parking garage to start."

At this point Justin took control of the meeting. He thanked Dr. Siano for his time to listen to our proposal, and welcomed any feedback after he had debriefed with me. I interpreted that statement correctly: I had taken a dive off the deep end of reality, and Justin was doing damage control. I felt awful, and could tell sweat was running off my head onto the table in front of me. In my zeal, I had wasted the time of the superintendent, the director of guidance and counseling, and the director of special services, and destroyed any chance of moving forward in one sentence about a parking garage. And then, Dr. Siano's experience and knowledge were displayed again as he responded, "Peter, you will need to provide a more focused approach to this initiative before we meet with any agency. I will personally send out invitations to our pre-existing partners including Norman Regional, CCFI, and United Way. We will meet in the next few months. Please make sure you are prepared for the next meeting. I will

introduce you, and then you will take the meeting, so you should probably not mention ideas like parking garages." He smiled, and the meeting was over.

As I reflected on this meeting with Dr. Siano, I soon realized not only the multitude of mistakes I had made both in preparation and in presentation, but more importantly the grace he had shown in holding the meeting and listening to my proposal. With over fifteen thousand students in the district and over one thousand employees, the daily demands on him were significant. In the midst of the issues he was dealing with at the time, he carved out an hour to listen to one principal in the district muddle through an unprepared proposal. Not only did he listen carefully to my idea, he provided feedback, guidance, and allowed me to continue developing my plans. I found myself remembering several meetings with teachers or students proposing ideas at Longfellow and how I had quickly dismissed them and moved on to what I perceived to be more important issues at hand. Dr. Siano could have very easily ended the meeting and my passion in one quick statement, but he didn't. He allowed me to continue pursuing my dream of developing this plan fully, while providing input on how to proceed more effectively.

Administrative mentoring programs in universities do not adequately prepare principals for the many roles and responsibilities they must assume in the educational setting (Ashby, 1991; Bridges, 1977; Murphy & Hallinger, 1987). Rather than focus on the operational needs of Longfellow including intervention structures, assessments, and curriculum, Dr. Siano saw past the external pressures on the school and used his experience to provide knowledge and skills to better develop who I was and what I could do as a leader in the district (Crow & Matthews, 1998; Reis, 2003). While I did

not realize it in the moment of the meeting, as I reflected I gained better understanding of his role as the district's superintendent. Affording time to properly develop leaders within the district would build capacity and relationships, ultimately increasing abilities and performance of those in leadership positions (Crow & Matthews, 1998).

My more careful consideration of organization theory, as well as viewing decisions through a leadership lens, could have led to a more productive conclusion to this meeting. It was clear that the hierarchy model at the district level included one leader (Dr. Siano) supervising a circle or all-channel network of personnel working with each other (Bolman & Deal, 2013) through a distributed, reciprocally interdependent relationship (Lambert, Walker, Zimmerman, Cooper, Lambert, Gardner, & Szabo, 2002; Spillane et al., 2004). Had I properly understood this model, I would have prepared for the meeting much more thoroughly with Justin, and learned from his guidance what I could, or should, say during the meeting. As usual, my tenacity overpowered my sensitivity to the organizational structure I was working within, and I was unable to consider the discretionary practices Dr. Siano would likely follow when deciding how to divvy up the limited resources available. In order to satisfy needs of the board of education, the community and their leaders, parents, students, and teachers, he must appreciate how his decisions are viewed from each managerial position within the context of student development. I was ignoring these issues, and was focused primarily on my narrow vision of what was "right," but he had a much wider and deeper range of responsibilities, and while I believe he valued my passion, he knew that devoting the resources I was asking for would negatively impact a variety of other

initiatives, as well as create tension within the district and community (Baker & LeTendre, 2005; Baker & Wiseman, 2006; Howard, 2012).

March 6, 2012: The New Vision

After careful consideration of the lessons learned in my first visit with Dr. Siano, I prepared carefully for our first meeting with partner agencies at the district office. I built a presentation and planned each moment of the meeting to guide those present down the path of my intended outcome: the development of a facility at Longfellow capable of providing any services needed for students and families. Again, I found myself in the conference room next to Dr. Siano's office, and again he stepped in and sat at the head of the table. He welcomed Kristin Collins from the United Way, Paula Price from Norman Regional Hospital, and Katie Fitzgerald from CCFI, as well as Justin Milner and Sharon Heatly. He introduced me as he had previously informed me he would, and then I began my presentation.

As I walked those at the meeting through details we had each discussed individually in earlier meetings, I felt as if I were just replaying old recordings so that we all could hear the same message at the same time. I felt that this meeting was more theater than anything else, but necessary to move forward as a group. There was little to discuss, I thought, and I was still waiting for the approval to officially move forward with the initiative and to make the idea public.

After I had finished my brief introduction, I began by leading them through a series of questions to which I was certain I knew the answers. The questions included location, accessibility by agencies, and sustainability. It was then that the meeting took a shift quite different than I had expected. One of the members in the room remarked

that with our current data, would a need not be better served by housing a facility off campus to include more than just the students and their families? Katie mentioned that she was looking at some space near Longfellow to create a facility that could house many of these services, and we could refer families and students to that location for assistance. By holding this off site, it would limit the possibility of a negative reaction by the community, and also expand the reach of services to families. Those in the room agreed, and began discussing what services could be included in this location away from Longfellow. I found myself paralyzed. I had not prepared for such a drastic change in plans so quickly, and had no reason why we should stay on campus, other than to serve my own desire.

I listened as the conversation moved toward adult education services that we could provide through our partnership, and include distance learning opportunities with computers, Internet, and possibly the K20 center. While all these seemed like viable options, they were a complete departure from the very reason why I began this mission: to include services *at* the school site for students and families, where we would provide them what they needed within the school walls. I had watched families refuse to travel anywhere other than the school for help years before, and could not understand why the meeting was taking such a turn away from what we needed, and had no way of righting the ship during the moment. I could only hope to end the meeting quickly, regroup, and try again at a later date.

What I failed to understand and acknowledge at the time was the specific nature of what a community school is designed to provide. A community school goes beyond the services rendered within the confines of the school walls, but not having a thorough

working knowledge of research and literature in and around community schools, I had allowed both the definition and purpose to remain so vague it would only seem reasonable to form a completely different structure. Unknown then, by beginning with the name change from community school to community center, that alone had begun the unraveling of the true nature of a community school, and it was only by sheer luck and tenacity I had come as far as I had at this juncture. I entered into a world with no real understanding, and was paying the price of that during this meeting, but at the time lacked the knowledge to even understand that. It would be many months later that I would come to the realization of what we were truly attempting to form. Plans were made to meet again in a few months, including a few more agencies, and I left defeated, angry, and resolved to fix what I had destroyed.

CHAPTER FOUR

Year Two

The lessons learned in my first year as principal at Longfellow were difficult to endure. The charisma and tenacity which had brought about success in the past proved inadequate to overcome the finite organizational resources, limited assistance available from community-based social service agencies serving as intermediary organizations, and my lack of leadership experience to coordinate services. While I had learned a bit more patience in an initiative of this magnitude, my continual lack of sensitivity to process, combined with a lack of a true understanding of what it was we were trying to create, led to continual obstacles. However, as I accepted my lack of understanding, I undertook more learning and research, and the true goal of a holistic approach to student development began to take shape.

June 6, 2012: Regrouping and the Bus

I was determined to make my vision a reality and did not want to see it moved to an off-site location, or include what I considered to be superficial and unneeded services. Our next meeting was set for June 6, and included representatives from United Way, Norman Public Schools, Norman Police, Health for Friends, and Norman Regional Hospital. I set the meeting location on my home turf of Longfellow in hopes of guiding the direction of the meeting in a manner more closely related to my specific vision. Justin Milner attended as well, and I suspected he viewed his role was one of keeping a close eye on how I led the discussion, to ensure we were taking into account the beliefs and needs of the entire community, and not to place us in the center of the development, rather as a partner. I disregarded this notion, and felt savvy enough to

manipulate the meeting to meet my needs, while also appearing to play a minor role in the overall development. Unlike the previous meeting, I was ready for the unexpected, and felt confident that I could overcome any obstacle placed in front of me during the meeting. But my typical autocratic approaches would lead to more push back from these organizations as well as my supervisors.

Justin was aware of the complexities of what we were attempting to implement, and continued to mentor me in hopes that I would see the same issues, but I was unwilling to see this through in any way but my own. My inability to view these issues through the perspective of the agencies, parents, and students created a chasm between my initiative and meaningful help for students, but I did not have the theoretical awareness or experience at the time to understand it (Howard, 2012; Lortie, 2009).

I began the meeting by recapping details from the meeting in early March, and presented options for moving forward. I described a general philosophy for creating a space to meet the needs of all students, and outlined our data indicating need within Longfellow and Norman Public Schools. As I expected, the entire room agreed with the vision of the center, and agreed it would benefit all of Norman if created. Ideas were shared from the perspective of each agency: health services, neighborhood centers, how to attract students and families, educational services for families, and how to provide supplies to the community as needed. I noticed with the flurry of ideas, no one agency was outlining specific financial backing or personnel it was willing to provide.

I stopped the discussion and asked rather pointedly what each agency was willing to provide should we move forward with this idea, and I was met with silence. As my frustration began showing in my expression, Justin spoke up. He stated that he

had looked at various models of centers, and believed that specifics of services to be provided could be looked at in a later meeting.

While this moved the conversation forward, the impact of their non-commitment flustered me. Before I could regroup and help guide the conversation back to what I believed to be needed action from all parties, one member of the meeting mentioned a mobile station carrying medical and dental services that could move from school to school, as well as be utilized by the police department on the weekends to serve needs in other areas of Norman. The group immediately latched on to this idea, and felt that a mobile station would avoid the possible stigma of having one site identified with a permanent facility and would enhance its usefulness by making its services available in other locations on weekends. We had gone from an off-site adult education community center to a bus driving around the district in just two meetings. I remember glancing at Justin, and his smile indicated he was well aware of my frustrations, but his experience and knowledge seemed to expect a turn like this. We ended the meeting with the plan to develop a strategic plan, and meet again when we had a more specific plan to discuss.

I met with Justin after the completion of the meeting, and shared my frustration with the past several meetings. In my opinion, we were taking the idea, *my* idea, into an ineffective model, incapable of providing the help needed for students in the building or in the district. His response was clear and purposeful: I did not have enough knowledge in the subject, nor evidence to support any claim I was making. I should expect constant turns like this if I continued to set meetings without any expertise whatsoever, and he repeated that in order for this to move forward in a more effective manner, I should spend more time researching the topic I was discussing, and less time trying to

manipulate my audience in the direction I felt necessary. It was a powerful message, one that I took to heart. Justin was an experienced educational leader in the district, and I appreciated his willingness to guide my progress during my formative years as head principal. Like Dr. Siano, rather than dismissing my inexperience and putting an end to these activities, he spent time to engage in mentoring, allowing me to develop my skills as principal (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006; Chapman, 2005; Ricciardi, 2000).

I became determined to develop an educated voice in the matter of community schooling before moving forward. Tulsa was hosting a conference at the end of July, and I made plans to attend to learn more about the processes involved with the development of the model there.

June 27, 2012: A New Hope

Brian Karnes contacted me and asked to see me, so we set up a meeting at Longfellow for the afternoon of June 27. There had been no changes since our last meeting with the local agencies, so I was unsure of what he wanted in this meeting. He met me in my office, and hesitated briefly before speaking. He spoke straight to his point, "So, I've been thinking about this issue with the development of a FQHC here at Longfellow. What you need is a facility, a bed for patients, supplies, medication, and personnel." He was stating issues we had gone over several times prior to this meeting, so I couldn't understand the necessity of this meeting, but I allowed him to continue. "I realized a few days ago… I have a part time Nurse Practitioner," as he spoke those words my face must have changed quickly, because a smile began creeping into the edges of his mouth. I leaned forward, waiting to hear what he had to say next. "I know you've been looking for funding options, and approval to begin looking at providing

health services for students at Longfellow… I have a part time Nurse Practitioner, I have a medical bed, I have medication, what I need is a space over here to put all of it." I could not contain my excitement at this point, I jumped up, grabbed him and lifted him off the ground. Brian was offering to provide supplies, furniture, medications, and a full-time staff all at no cost to the district. All I needed was the space for it, and approval by our administration. This was the light I was hoping for, and had no realistic hope it would ever happen.

I asked him how this decision came about, and he responded, "Well, I've seen what it means to you and the students and families here at Longfellow, and I figured, why not?" It was a simple response for such an arduous journey thus far. It wasn't the panacea I had imagined, but it was a step in the right direction, and I was more excited than I had been since the first day sitting down with Katie Fitzgerald and conceiving the idea a year prior. We spoke a little more about how to propose this idea to the superintendent, and he suggested we do a pilot study at Longfellow with the possibility of moving services into a mobile station if that was the direction the district wanted to take it. He thought we could take approximately ten random families, and track specific health indicators both before treatment and after. I would gather behavior and attendance data as well, and in combination we would look for positive outcomes and compare them to a control group to utilize in grant proposals, or further proposals for the district initiative. I was overwhelmed; I could not believe how quickly the idea was taking form. Now we had something tangible that we could present to Dr. Siano, gain approval, and begin implementing.

We set off through campus to find a suitable area for the clinic. Brian explained we needed a separate location away from student classrooms. We needed a waiting area for families, then one office for the practitioner, then another room for the medical bed, then a third room for supplies, and a lab area in which to keep medications. We walked down the main hallway of the school, newly renovated as part of the recent bond election. Fresh paint covered the walls, and a new floating ceiling accentuated the modern remodel of the wing of the school. Near the center of the hall of classrooms was the entrance to the building as well as into the remodeled auditorium. Just inside the entrance to the building were small office spaces, which used to house Longfellow administration. I showed him this space, and he responded that he could make that space work. My next step was to gain more information from the trip to Tulsa, and then navigate through the proposal process with Dr. Siano.

Nick Migliorino, Director of Secondary Education, had resigned his position to pursue a career in educational technology. He had created an application that schools could use to communicate with students, parents, and community through smartphones and the web. The company that had acquired the application was already involved in other school products and wanted him to lead a venture to broaden their reach with the use of electronic communications. Holly Nevels, a principal at another local middle school, had assumed his job roles and responsibilities as Director of Secondary Education, supervising all the head and assistant principals at the four middle schools and two high schools in town. Holly was a long time friend and colleague of mine, who had mentored me from my first years as a teacher at Irving as another teacher in the building, then as my principal at Norman High, and was now the Director of Secondary

Education. I felt confident that she would be supportive of this initiative, but was nervous as well; this work would be meaningless if she did not feel this was a worthwhile venture. I had always looked up to Holly for advice, she was extremely intelligent, thoughtful, caring, and highly competent in any job she took on. I hoped that she saw the value in my idea, and would support my initiative with Dr. Siano. New managers bring new variables, including new beliefs and interpretations. The messiness of organizations, full of constantly changing factors such as the placement of new managers, requires a fluid and flexible response in order to move forward in an effectively responsive way. This change could be beneficial with the appropriate knowledge and experience, with a clear understanding of leadership style, resources available, and where her role would fit in the greater organization; with my lack of understanding of these, it was unclear if I would be able to move forward with the initiative (Howard, 2012).

July 26, 2012: Tulsa Community School

I arrived at the location where the event began and was immediately impressed by the magnitude of the event. I had imagined a venue similar to what I would set up at Longfellow: a small table to greet community members, a few moments to speak to a small contingency of community officials in the auditorium, and perhaps some breakout sessions led by school personnel and agency leaders on the benefits of a community school model within the public school system. The Tulsa initiative was much more than I expected, beginning with the number of people present. It appeared that several hundred people were being ushered into the facility, and name tags and presentation information were at the welcoming table outside the auditorium. I received the packet

and found a seat in the large facility, and began looking through the breakout sessions. One session caught my eye: Dr. Curt Adams was presenting on research concerning the effectiveness of the community school model. As I made a note to attend that session, the presentation began as Dr. Ballard, superintendent of Tulsa Public Schools, gave the opening address. Dr. Ballard's words were poignant: he summarized the need to have community involvement in the creation of a community school. These were not just words, he explained, but a real issue that must be fleshed out before seeing success in an implementation model. I reflected on my inability to connect the agencies in Norman effectively, instead trying to drive my own thoughts and beliefs forward rather than guiding the community to act together (Baker & LeTendre, 2005; Howard, 2012).

Dr. Cathy Burden, superintendent of Union Public Schools, discussed how accountability measures in Oklahoma have turned into a hammer rather than a motivator. Regardless of the efforts of schools, we must have support from other systems in our environment in order to be successful with both students and families. Issues of racism, violence, funding for educational opportunities, care before and after school, extended learning opportunities through summer and the school year, and implementing early childhood educational opportunities are issues that all public schools face. Dr. Burden said the main problem today is poverty in schools, and to have a true impact on educating our youth we must incorporate supports and understand community needs concerning housing, employment, health care, and enhance the power of parents to more effectively raise their children. When we empower a community, Dr. Burden expressed, the community realizes that the school is not a place of

intimidation and fear, but a hub for a community where we are there to support them, which empowers parents to be part of the solution.

It was clear this initiative was not produced solely by hopes and dreams of an individual. Careful planning, research, and collaboration were required to implement a sustained model of service development within the school setting. What I had previously only heard a very little about and dismissed as a model which did not fit the needs of Longfellow was very clearly a robust model capable of helping hundreds, if not thousands, of students and families in a multitude of ways.

After the keynote speaker had completed his presentation, I found Dr. Adam's session and listened to his research surrounding the evaluation of the Tulsa Community School Model. What I found most interesting in his presentation was that he discovered significant correlations between trust levels of students and teachers, and achievement scores by those students. As I understood his session, if we could increase levels of trust between students and teachers, we could begin seeing immediate improvements in achievement. I had an opportunity to introduce myself after the session ended, and he seemed pleased hearing of the attempt we were making in Norman to provide the students and community a similar model. He referred me to other research avenues as well, which I would soon be able to take the time to read to better understand the nature of community schooling.

For the next few months I spent time both in coursework at the university and time outside of school researching books and articles concerning community schools. A full review of the literature and critique of the research can be found in the appendix of this dissertation. Through this literature I found how comprehensive community

school models are sustained through inclusive processes that situate family and community together to meet the needs of the whole child. My complete analysis of literature can be found in appendices 1.A and 1.B of this dissertation.

January 14, 2013: Approval

The notion of fast implementation of a community school, or even a health clinic, was now a distant memory. I had spent the past several months doing research and continuing to build relationships with local agencies. I brought our existing partners up to speed on the idea of the health clinic implementation by Brian Karnes and Health for Friends, and it seemed at the time that all of the agencies were excited to see this first step become a reality. I met with Holly Nevels, the Director of Secondary Education, and she too was supportive of the initiative. After winter break had passed and we were back in school, she contacted me and informed me Dr. Siano was ready to meet with Brian, her, and me regarding the new idea of the health clinic. She explained that she had briefed him on the shift away from a community center idea to this, and he wanted to hear more before moving forward for board approval. She made it clear that at this time it was still to be a confidential matter, and I agreed that it would be best to not share with staff or the public at this time. I contacted Brian and set up our appointment for the afternoon of January 14.

We met in Dr. Siano's office, and this was the first time both Dr. Siano and Brian Karnes had the opportunity to share the same room since this idea had formed. Holly welcomed us, and asked me to begin the meeting. I walked Dr. Siano through the past several months, including presenting some of my research on the benefits of the implementation of a health clinic within the school setting. He listened carefully, then

responded. "We already have a strong partnership with Norman Regional with our nursing program throughout the district. Will this health clinic provide an extension of this already established partnership, or be something completely different?"

I was quick to reply, and unfortunately did not carefully consider his question before answering. "Dr. Siano, this would be nothing like the nursing partnership we have with the hospital here in town." At that instant I could gauge by his response that this was not what he was most hoping to hear. I realized that by separating the health clinic from the nursing partnership, it might alienate the nursing program at Longfellow or the entire district, and possibly create tension in our already established relationship with the hospital. I wanted to correct my mistake somehow, but had no words to remedy the situation. Then Brian interjected: "Dr. Siano, I don't mean to speak for Peter, but I believe the health clinic would be an extension of the already well-established connection between the district and Norman Regional. The role of the nurse would continue to be what it is: meet the needs of students in a variety of ways, all of which are vital to the health of students here in Norman. What we would provide would be the availability of medical services including immunity shots, rapid flu tests, strep tests, and other services not currently available to students while at school."

As he completed his statement, he turned to me and winked with a slight grin on his face. I looked over at Holly and Dr. Siano, and they had not noticed his grin, nor his wink. Dr. Siano replied, "Wow, flu tests for students at school. Parents would not have to take off work, they could just give permission for students to get checked without the need of taking off work," and Brian interrupted him by finishing, "and begin treatment

immediately if tested positive, to decrease the amount of time out of school recovering." I could not have planned a more magical moment if I had tried.

"Will there be preventative counseling available? Teen pregnancy or other issues surrounding those issues?" Brian's reply was quick and direct, "No sir. We refer all issues concerning those matters to their primary care physician, just like we do now at Health for Friends. If they do not have a family practitioner, we will refer them to the health department. Our role is to provide acute care in a facility in the school for convenience for the families."

Dr. Siano sat, thoughtful for a moment. He leaned forward, and uttered the words I had waited for for over a year, "I am one hundred percent behind this initiative." To this day I recall music and a choir behind him as he said those words. My joy was uncontrollable, and my emotion got the best of me for the moment; I hoped they had not seen tears welling up in my eyes as I quickly wiped them away. Over a year and a half of work and research had resulted in this moment, and Brian Karnes had made my dream a reality.

Dr. Siano outlined the next steps: our attorney would meet with Brian's attorney to work out details of the partnership and how we would handle permission to utilize the clinic, and he would start contacting the board of education members to brief them on the details to gain support. He hoped for a summer opening, so he wanted to move quickly. I was shocked to hear another person urge to move quickly; I had grown accustomed to slow movement, and had also learned to appreciate the benefits of moving carefully both by experience and in research (Baker & LeTendre, 2005; Lortie, 2009; Watson, 2012). He asked what space we would use for the clinic, and I

mentioned that Toby Blair, one of the assistant principals at Longfellow, had found an area he felt may be better suited to the needs of a health clinic. In a separate building located on campus included a lounge with an outside entrance, two rooms, and two bathrooms. One room could be transformed into an exam room, and the other could be used as a waiting room. The benefit of this space is the outside access, away from the flow of student traffic to increase security and confidentiality. The down side to this space was that it also housed our chemical storage for the science classrooms, and the only entrance was through what could be used as the exam room. Dr. Siano immediately responded that he would contact our district maintenance department and see if we could have a door created to the hallway inside the building to be used as an alternate entrance to the chemical storage area. I knew work orders involving construction like this would at times take months to complete, so I felt this may be an issue moving forward to open by summer, but I was far too excited to mention the issue at this juncture. The meeting ended and as Brian and I left the building, I took a moment to thank him for making this a reality. We would not be here without him.

Seven Steps

When I returned to school I could not contain my excitement, and shared the news with my leadership team consisting of two assistant principals, three counselors, and our instructional coach. They had helped at various points in the prior year and a half, and when I shared the news with them the room exploded in hugs, laughter, crying, and celebration. That afternoon I was contacted by the head of maintenance, who indicated that the crews would be over the following morning to place a door in the hallway of the science hall lounge. Dr. Siano had already made the call, and within

twenty-four hours we would have a new door in our hallway, readying the space for our health clinic.

The excitement spilled over into the next morning, and I made another critical error in the process of gaining a mutual partnership among stakeholders. I was meeting with our leadership team of teachers, including members of each grade level team, a representative from our exploratory classes, our gifted coordinator, and front-office staff. At the end of the meeting, I explained briefly the ongoing need to better serve our students, and in this process we would be utilizing space in the building, so they should expect some construction within the next day or two. When questions began flying, I maintained as much confidentiality to the matter as I could, but it was clear that something was coming, and going to use the space in the lounge. I felt excited to share the news with anyone, as I had felt compelled to remain silent about plans. I had guessed the teachers would be ecstatic to hear news of a program designed to serve needs of students and did not expect any negative response.

Throughout the day I heard of several teachers asking others about the lounge, and what it was going to be used for. One teacher informed me one of her co-teachers was in tears over the restricted use of the lounge. I asked why she was upset, and the teacher responded that she did not know. I urged the teacher to ask her co-teacher to come and see me so we could speak about it.

After school, the teacher met me in my office. I asked her how I could help her, and she stated that she had been upset to hear that the lounge was going to be off limits, restricting her use of a staff bathroom. I apologized for the confusion, and said that we had several other bathrooms that she could use. She replied that the distance would be

much greater, and that limiting access to the facility in the lounge would create problems.

I had spent most of the day wondering what specific reasons for the negative feelings by teachers might be and was surprised to learn it was about the use of a bathroom. In my career I had never considered the segregation between adult and student through bathrooms, lounges, or offices. Unthinkingly, if I needed to use the bathroom, I would find the nearest one, whether it was an employee or student restroom. Sharing adult spaces with students had never been an issue for me, and not only was I confused by the notion that it might somehow be an issue for an adult working in the world of kids, I found myself becoming agitated trying to explain myself to the teacher.

I described what the space was to be used for, and asked her to keep the information in confidence, as Dr. Siano had asked. I expected that she would be satisfied when she knew what the space would be used for, but she explained that the change seemed to be undertaken without consideration of teachers' concerns or views. Trying to hide my anger and display a rationale demeanor, I again asked her if she knew about the other bathrooms, and she replied again that they were considerably further away. I offered to walk the distance with her, and she agreed. As we walked by the office staff members, I said, "Okay, let's go walk this off." I noticed the shock in my assistant principals' faces as they heard me, and could only imagine how red my face must have been in the moment. As hard as I was trying to maintain an open and caring attitude, I found the exercise we were undertaking trivial and felt annoyed by it, without reflecting that because staff bathroom proximity had not been an issue for me, that was

not necessarily the case for everyone else. We walked to the lounge bathroom, then to the next nearest bathroom from the classroom. I pointed out that there was a student bathroom directly across from the classroom, but that observation was met with silence. We first finished the route to the faculty lounge in the main building with fifty steps. We then retraced our path and began again, heading to the lounge bathroom which was going to be used for the health clinic, and completed the journey in fifty-seven steps. I looked at her and asked her, "Are we really concerned about a difference of seven steps?" Her reply seemed desperate and angered me. She was concerned that she would need to walk outside to get to the bathroom, instead of staying within classroom building. Knowing that any response in this heated moment would only cause more negative feelings from both of us, I ended the conversation.

This was my first negative interaction with a staff member regarding the initiative due to its confidential development. As much as I wanted to disregard her reaction as inconsequential, I knew instinctively that this could lead to much bigger issues surrounding change and upheaval among staff members. Shapiro and Gross (2013) define turbulence theory, which considers a variety of factors to determine the level of turbulence affecting an institution. Ranging from light to extreme, turbulence can be associated with ongoing day-to-day issues resulting in little disruption to the organization or be so severe that it impacts the institution's operations in a substantial way. In the context of this situation, what may appear as a light amount of turbulence as it might only affect the perceptions of a few, could cascade into a much larger disruption, if handled improperly. If I were to judge her positionality in this case as insignificant, with little or no impact on those around her or the larger institution, I

might be right and it could result in little or no turbulence. However, if I misjudged others' reactions, including parents' and administrators', the situation could quickly rise to an extreme level of turbulence. This would prove to be true sooner than I expected.

A few days later I received a phone call from the assistant superintendent in charge of personnel for the district, Pat Nolen. He was an exceptionally kind man, and had spent many hours helping me in my career, offering mentorship and aid whenever I asked. He asked if I had heard anything about the union issue surrounding the removal of a teacher's lounge in the science hall, and I replied that I was aware of a situation from talking with one teacher, but did not know it had reached the district union rep. He was unaware of any plans, as Dr. Siano had asked to keep the matter confidential, but I explained the situation as well as I could in the short amount of time on the phone. He thanked me for the information and stated that he would get back to me soon.

The turbulence created by this situation had affected more than just one teacher; it had rippled now as far as the superintendent's cabinet, and posed a threat to plans for the location of the health clinic. That afternoon I was contacted by Holly, who began her conversation by asking if I was alone and sitting down. I immediately knew the news was not going to be good, so I braced myself for the information. She informed me that Dr. Siano had spoken with Pat, and because of the negative interaction between the teacher and district personnel, he felt that the process had received more publicity at this stage than he felt comfortable with, especially since he had not had a chance to contact each of the board members to inform them of the idea we were considering at Longfellow. As I caught my breath, she informed me that my responsibility at this point was to ensure that no more information about the health clinic would be spoken

of, until further notice. I asked her what timeline she thought we were looking at, and she replied that it would probably be months before we could continue the conversation. I asked her candidly to give her impression of whether or not the future of the clinic was in jeopardy, and she replied that she did not know. I informed my leadership team of the news, and we halted all communications about the possibility for the indefinite future. In this experience we all realized how fragile the effort was, and more importantly that our view of priorities for what was in the best interest of children was not a view that was self-evident and automatically shared by all staff members (Frick, 2011). What was worse, there was more bad news to come in the next few months.

April: The End of Health for Friends

We had maintained our silence for several months. I had not been idle; I had spent more time researching, and in coursework at the university began exploring the relationship between a community school implementation and capital development in various forms including human, social, and cultural. A more thorough analysis of forms of capital development juxtaposed with the development of community school models can be found in the next chapter of this dissertation.

It was late march when Brian Karnes contacted me. I could tell by his tone that the news he was about to share would not be positive, and I was correct. "Well, there's good news and bad news Pete," he began. "The bad news is that we can't build the health clinic anymore." I felt my stomach drop, and I asked what the good news was. "The good news is that we are merging with Variety Care, a larger corporation providing health services, and I have already informed them of our desire to build a clinic here, and they are very interested. All hope is not lost; they would like to come

down and view the area to consider the possibility." I interpreted this as another beginning: to convince another group of people of the need to create this clinic at Longfellow. I had not lost hope, but I was not optimistic. I shared with Brian what had taken place a few months earlier, and that for now we would need to stay away from the development. He felt that would probably be best, as it would take a while for the merger to conclude, and then we would be able to regroup and pitch the idea to their board. While this was another setback in a long string of ups and downs through this process, it also had allowed me time to gain insight into the complexities of community school development. The result of being forced to wait had benefited me greatly, and my focus was much less about timelines at this point than it was creating an environment best fit for the students and community. A quick-fix approach would only result in a quick failure. I was much more interested in creating a sustainable model capable of inclusion of community leaders, educators, and parents in a long-term effort to help students in a meaningful way.

CHAPTER FIVE

An Analysis of Forms of Capital and Its Development

Throughout my previous experiences in education, as a student at every level, and as a teacher and administrator, I had remained largely unconscious of notions of education as a system of capital management. Decisions and actions were based on my lived experiences, devoid of much critical theoretical exploration. My views have expanded, over years of experience, as more fully described in the following pages in relation to contemporary scholarship, and the description is an essential factor in understanding my on-going actions and reactions in work to develop a community school, and to write an account of it. I use this chapter to not only outline scholarly work in and around the sociological theory of the forms of capital, but also as a direct transition in my experience and knowledge while developing a community school model at Longfellow. This chapter takes a less narrative form to accentuate my developing understanding of the sociological underpinnings of my local and immediate work as a school leader.

Our lives are made up of related moments and experiences. We connect to those around us and our shared experiences, as well as our independent experiences, accumulate and create a connected social world. The idea that society consists of independent experiences, with individuals pursuing their own beliefs and goals independent of one another, is fiction (Goddard, 2003). Chance and coincidence, while seemingly independent of other relationships and connections we have made, are all interconnected and are built from one another (Bourdieu, 1986). Relationships, their interactions and developments, are a form of social structure (Goddard, 2003).

Bourdieu (1986) describes capital, which accumulates over time, is not limited to economic capital, but involves many different forms. While economic capital has great importance to our lives, is not independent of other forms of capital including cultural capital or social capital. These two other forms of capital which may be converted into economic capital form the three connected forms in the social world. Each form is dependent on the area in which it functions, as well as the amount of focus each receives to determine its effectiveness within that field. Bourdieu argues that all forms of capital can be reduced to economic capital. The cultural and social capital accumulated over time by a group or family is sustainable through economic capital, and the notion that continued development of cultural and social capital through schooling will pay off in the long term (Bourdieu, 1986).

Bourdieu (1986) separates cultural capital into three forms: the embodied state, the objectified state, and the institutionalized state, which Bourdieu relates directly to the institution of schooling. Cultural capital is distributed among social class, and academic achievement is measured in gains or "profit" in capital. This divergent thought veers from the common conception that human aptitude is fixed or static based on heredity. Focusing on economic gains based on school achievement by examining a child's ability to grow within the educational system conforming to social norms and gaining cultural capital to later give back monetarily to society is too narrow a view. Bourdieu argues the most important aspect of educational investments is the increase in cultural capital, and the reproduction of the social structure. Cultural capital, invested by the family as well as the educational institution, and at times independent of each other, yield increased cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986).

The embodied state is an investment of time by the individual. It must be cultivated individually; it cannot be gained by external factors. Bourdieu points out that this investment cannot be calculated solely on time, but on beneficial cultural capital investments that result in positive gains back to that capital, not necessarily monetary in value (Bourdieu, 1986). Cultural capital can be gained by the individual unconsciously, but is dependent on the social class surrounding the individual to determine worth. In the embodied state, this cultural capital is grown through the individual, and therefore leaves when the individual dies due to its specific link to the person holding it. As an individual gains specific competence defined by the culture, especially in instances where those gains are greater than the average growth of others in the same social construct, he or she is given distinction, as most surrounding that individual do not have the economic or cultural capital to sustain their own education nor their family's education to reproduce the same amount of gains (Bourdieu, 1986). The embodied capital cannot be transferred easily or quickly, as noted in many shifts in administration of business or education. The embodied state of cultural capital is grown by an individual and viewed by the social world surrounding him or her with a certain value. That value cannot be bestowed to a replacement without a similar process of developing capital. In other words, when a supervisor leaves, and a new one takes the position, the embodied capital leaves with the prior supervisor, it is not transferred to the new one. However, cultural capital is transferred through families; if one family member gains cultural capital above those in the surrounding social context, that cultural capital can be transferred to the children of that individual and they may receive a greater weight of

capital (Bourdieu, 1986). Cultural capital is strongly linked to economic capital, based on the amount of time it takes to grow cultural capital.

A family must be economically willing and able to sustain a child's need to grow and develop cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986). However, society is becoming more individualistic as time goes on, with paths disconnecting between family and community (Coleman, 1986). While research is shifting from looking at social systems as a whole to a more individual approach, this viewpoint ignores the overall change in social structure. As this move away from looking at social systems as a whole and more to the individual, the same applies to research viewing individual actions impacting outside social constructs (Coleman, 1986). Coleman argues that families at all socio-economic classes are progressively becoming less able to handle the economic burdens to sustain this capital development (Coleman, 1987). Until recently, economic gains were based on internal family growth and immediate neighborhood. During the latter half of the 19th century new activities were introduced far from the household, requiring family members to seek work outside the family farm, or nearby area. The locus of dependency has changed as well; where once families were inclusive, taking care of one another and rarely leaving the house, as corporations have been built and work has removed mothers and fathers from the household, the welfare institution shifted from inside the household to a society issue (Coleman, 1987). The trends have shown a negative correlation between income levels and dependents in the household: an increased proportion of households have double incomes, with no dependents. Bourdieu's notion of sustaining economic capital to increase cultural capital seems

unlikely when compared to the increasing trends of separation of families, and loss of income.

Coleman (1987) also indicates an increasing trend in college expenses shifting from the burden of the parents to the idea that the government should hold more responsibility for educating children through grants and loans. Shifting the responsibility from the family to outside agencies results in less economic sustainability by the family to increase the cultural capital of the child, therefore decreasing overall gains that the child may be capable of if sustained by the family. Coleman (1987) states that while there may be an argument that dividing economic responsibility and labor may be fine for some, there is evidence that when this shift occurs, the implications are that schools are more effective for children with strong family backgrounds than children who come from a divided family through work and economics. A family focused on careers and income fail to consider the cultural and social capital of the children, and by doing so their overall worth decreases in these domains.

To compensate for this divergence, Adams (2010) notes the need for cross-boundary leadership. As community leaders, parents, and educators work together in the educational system, a shared leadership increases performance of students. Bourdieu and Coleman do not discuss the differences in developing cultural capital between internal family support and external community support, but if there is a lack of cultural capital support in the home, these external factors yield positive results (Adams, 2010). Cross-boundary leadership shares equal responsibility between all parties involved in the students' lives, and by doing so, seemingly abdicates the

responsibility of the family to invest in the child's cultural capital and shifts it to the responsibility of the social world around the child.

This shared cross-boundary leadership style integrates with a holistic approach to teaching the child. Adams states, "Social and economic structures have left such communities with limited capacity to address the psychological and social needs that families and communities traditionally satisfy" (2010, p. 14). Developing student efficacy, motivation, and performance must include services other than core subjects in order to address the needs not being addressed by the family. Miller (2000) describes holistic education to focus on "identity, meaning, and purpose in life through connections to the community, to the natural world, and to spiritual values such as compassion and peace" (p. 1). Holistic education involves fostering youth and their love of learning, sense of wonder, and intrinsic love of life.

Zaff and Smerdon (2009) share similar views in that approaches to only focus on student achievement within the school setting will not adequately prepare them for life after school. They argue the need for a framework that addresses the needs of students in their first two decades of life. Supports must be provided in a social surround of limited resources, including those facilitating growth in academics, social and civic responsibilities, cognitive and emotional. They also discuss the need to develop these experiences across family, educational settings, and community, and the need to fully understand each setting before addressing the needs of students as they develop in those formative years (Zaff & Smerdon, 2009).

Material objects make up cultural capital in its objectified state (Bourdieu, 1986). Transferring these material objects is possible through ownership, and these

objects may come to possession through economic means and cultural capital through the embodied state. The embodied capital is only as proportionally strong as the social world surrounding it; its symbolic wealth, which may be transferred to economic wealth, is dependent on the extent to which the social class surrounding it gives value to it (Bourdieu, 1986).

The institutionalized state of cultural capital through academic gains allows an individual to exceed biological limits or social constraints (Bourdieu, 1986). With respect to social culture surrounding an individual, academic success equates to a level of cultural competence, and can be converted to economic gains in the labor market if the academic investment takes meaning in the surrounding society. This state separates itself from simple cultural capital in that with the embodiment of the institutionalized state, certain recognitions are guaranteed, where in the simple cultural capital embodiment one has to continually justify him or herself (Bourdieu, 1986).

Social capital, according to Bourdieu (1986), involves links of relationships and recognition through membership in a group. Capital is gained through class, name, school, or organization, or may be developed through exchanges within the group. The capital gained by an individual is relative to the size and makeup of the group; the capital maintains or gains based on mutual acknowledgement of its worth. For example, if social relationships lack trust or engagement to education, results show low gains in academic achievement (Goddard, 2003). Relationships in the group must be meaningful and lasting to maintain material or symbolic profits. Mutual knowledge must be transferred and recognized, and through development of social capital, titles

and family names may be established to continue the institutionally guaranteed rights of the individual (Bourdieu, 1986).

Social capital is not individual, but a variety of elements facilitating behaviors within a structure (Coleman, 1988). Without social capital present, some achievement would not be possible, and it is specific to certain events and social worlds. Relations between all actors, whether they are people or corporate actors, constitute aspects of social capital. Coleman (1988) notes that where social capital can impact people in a positive manner there are circumstances where the same investment, in a different area or with different players, would result in no improvement, or negative results. Those who develop social capital in communities may create a system of advantage either consciously or unconsciously. Loury (1989) examines this inequitable circumstance relating to social capital as children who are born with certain advantages based on parental social capital. This impacts access to development of social capital to those not endowed with the advantage of birth in a negative manner, and hinders the ability of people without that advantage to gaining social capital as they grow into adulthood. Not only may this happen with individuals, but in groups and communities as well. Community social capital can be developed, and through this certain goods or exchanges may be available to those in that community, excluding other groups or individuals. Goods do not necessarily involve physical product, the same may apply to educational settings. In these examples, social capital may be developed within individuals and groups, and by doing so can perpetuate the continued exclusion of minority groups or those without access to the same social capital by birth (Loury, 1989).

Social capital is gained through the changes of people that are working within the structure (Coleman, 1988). Social capital is less about tangible items or economics, and more about the relations between actors in the social construct. A group that exhibits or utilizes high levels of trust or support is able to accomplish more than a group without trust. As trust within a group increases, so do obligations that will be repaid, and the extent of the obligations themselves. These obligations are not always monetary, but in an example Coleman (1988) describes, economic development was an important outcome of a small group contributing to a fund to help a group of friends. In this example, donations are given each month, and a payout is given to individuals each time. Social capital plays a large part in this dynamic relating to trustworthiness of the group. If the trust level of the group was low, an individual receiving a payoff early may elect to leave the group, and by doing so the effectiveness of the entire structure would fail. With increased trustworthiness, the effectiveness of this rotating credit increases as well. Coleman (1988) notes, that to transfer this idea into a large urban area would not work, due to the lack of trustworthiness of the size of the group.

Individuals who are granted or earn higher degrees of position hold an extreme amount of power compared to the others in a group, and can call on a great number of obligations by the other party members (Coleman, 1988). This level of power can be utilized not only for the benefit of the individual with that amount of power, but also to move the group forward in areas where they may not have been able to without a leader in high power. Similarly, social capital is increased for individuals participating in an exclusive group, compared to individuals outside the group. At times membership alone, regardless of title, results in an increase in social capital (Coleman, 1988).

Membership in groups must also incorporate generalized trust that extends beyond face to face interactions (Rothstein & Stolle, 2002). Partnerships can reach beyond friendship, and should be extended to people one does not know to reach that generalized trust. Actors within groups who participate in social exchanges and generalized trust allow for smooth transitions and minimizes the need for bureaucratic structures. Institutional conditions under which social capital can grow include development over long-term relationships founded in cultural experiences and interactions. Formal and informal connections create social capital and establish cooperative norms. However, these norms can be established to create negative results. As Rothstein and Stolle (2002) discuss, "In sum, so far we know that the use of membership in voluntary associations as a measurement of social capital should be handled with caution; and that its use as a producer of social capital is misplaced" (p. 6).

Institutions also impact and influence social capital among groups of people. Norms and interactions are based heavily on policies and practices of larger institutions surrounding them, and while they may not be connected to the same group, these institutions still have power to affect smaller groups' behaviors (Rothstein & Stolle, 2002). Rothstein and Stolle (2002) argue this institutional centered approach to creating social capital is prevalent in politics, however the same applies for educational settings within communities. Policies and practices mandated by the local educational boards can greatly affect the interactions of individuals in the community. This institutional theory involving generalized trust impacts local community feelings of safety and security.

Established norms impact a group's effectiveness and performance. If a community establishes specific norms and expectations, groups within that community tend to perform to the level of expectations set by the overall group. Norms in a community that focus on school achievement provide support for the school attempting to achieve the same levels of performance (Coleman, 1988). However, these norms in a community may result in children feeling pressured or decrease positive feelings by the student. Energy directed in particular ways inevitably move energy from other areas (Coleman, 1988).

Goddard (2003) examined results of a study in social capital measuring parents' social investment in their children and the surrounding community, and his analysis indicates those parents who invest in both groups show higher odds of their children graduating from high school and attending college. The study outlined in Goddard's 2003) research examined both the structure of connecting these groups to one another, and also the interactions between parents, children, and community. The study considered both the relational networks as well as norms within groups. Increasing social capital was significantly and positively related to students' odds of passing high stakes achievement tests, and incorporated a study of family, teachers, and community relationships.

As new members are introduced to the social group where established capital has been defined, groups that are designed to creating legitimate relationships use the new members to reproduce similar gains within the group (Bourdieu, 1986). Competence is an integral part of social capital; time, effort, and relationships are important, but skills at using these connections are vital to the continued success of the

group. As spokespeople are defined through the group, their role to defend the collective honor of the group is important, as well as shielding the group from discredit. While the concentration of this social capital to an individual leader enables individuals in a group to continue to grow, it also creates an avenue for misuse of power (Bourdieu, 1986).

Coleman (1988) discusses social capital in the creation of human capital, both in the family and outside the family. As Coleman (1988) states "human capital is approximately measured by parents' education and provides the potential for a cognitive environment for the child that aids learning" (p. 109). Children are strongly affected by the level of human capital by their parents, however if social capital is not complimented in the family relations with each other, the human capital becomes irrelevant. Parents' relations outside the family in the community play a role in the development of social capital as well. Parents with high levels of human capital, who support their children, will still be influenced by social norms and social capital when making choices for educational setting (Coleman, 1988).

Measuring social capital can be difficult. A simple nod in a school hallway may result in developing certain levels of social capital, that later may be converted into other social exchanges, tasks, or other benefits (Putnam, 2001). Putnam (2001) describes membership in several groups and long term sustaining of those groups as one form of measurement of social capital, although he states there are reasons to doubt these factors as adequate measures of social connectedness. This distinction between formal social capital and informal social capital including family events, picnics, informal gatherings on a regular basis is an important one that Putnam notes difficult to

find participation data. Putnam (2001) gathered data on social trust, and results indicate a steady decline of trust over the past several years. Putnam (2001) states that the decline in social trust has not changed over time, it is with each generation born that there is a decreased social trust. Coleman's (1988) divergence theory connects well to this as well: with less emphasis on building social and cultural capital within the home, it would stand to reason that a decrease in overall social trust is evident. Putnam (2001) argues a variety of factors that impact social capital, including immigration, educational performance, crime, poverty, health, taxes, and individual welfare.

While he tracked fixed organizations over the past century, he notes that he did not take into account while participation in these groups were declining, the possibility that new groups were forming and gaining traction simultaneously (Putnam, 2001). A counterargument offered from Putnam includes the possibility of groups like the Sierra Club, or National Organization for Women, or the American Association of Retired Persons (Putnam, 1995). These new groups may make up for the decline in the fixed organizations, but still does not answer for the decline of generational social trust.

Putnam (1995) states that the most fundamental form of social capital comes from the internal exchanges of the family, as he states the decline of the ties within family. He goes on to state "This trend, of course, is quite consistent with—and may help to explain—our theme of social decapitalization" (p. 70). In this study Putnam also describes overall trust in the U. S. is on the decline. He offers several theories as to why trust and social capital is on the decline in the U. S., including the movement of women toward the workforce, mobility of families, demographic transformations

including fewer marriages, increased divorces, less children, less income, and the privatization of leisure through use of technology (Putnam, 1995).

Social trust, when generalized, speaks to the trust we have to people unlike ourselves. Particularized trust, according to Rothstein and Uslaner (2005), describes trust only within the group to which the individual belongs. Generalized trust is based on the belief of equity, especially in communities of poverty, influenced by government policy. Optimism plays an important role in trust, which also lies in the foundations of economic stability (Rothstein & Uslaner, 2005).

As schools have increased their roles in developing children in the past several decades, school capacity, a relatively new concept, has emerged. School capacity involves the system resources that support the development of the educational system (Cosner, 2009). Trust plays an important role between colleagues, much like relations in a family help foster and develop social and human capital. As Cosner (2009) states, "Also regarded as a cognitive- or interaction-based trust, knowledge-based trust forms between individuals through repeated social exchanges" (p. 254). Knowledge, intellectual ability, and skills among teachers and staff increase instructional capacity in the school (Corcoran & Goertz, 1995). Positive interactions among teams of teachers generate knowledge-based trust, which results in gains in school capacity. Through this trust building, norms are established, which in turn acts as a facilitation of building social capital in the educational setting. Additionally, the improvements among staff by these norms and engagement in trust builds human capacity, resulting in higher achievement by students (Corcoran & Goertz, 1995).

Higher achievement is the focus of schools, aiming to close achievement gaps through various interventions and strategies. Recognizing the various forms of capital, their relation to each other, and how they affect the growth of a student are necessary when addressing the needs of students (Rothstein, 2004). However, this is often ignored when states use mandated assessments as their only determinant of student and school success. When the emphasis is placed on accountability exams, schools spend less time developing students holistically with attention to their social and cultural development (Bourdieu, 1986). The more school goals diverge from a holistic approach to student development, the less beneficial the credentialing system of schooling becomes. I have witnessed this first-hand in schools I have worked in. The continued pressures to increase state scores on tests have left little or no time to properly focus on the development of individual children while considering their unique social and cultural capital development and background. Ignorant of the historical context in which capital development shifted from within the household to external forces, teachers and building leaders interpret mandates from the district and state through a narrow field (Coleman, 1986; Coleman, 1987). Under the notion that schools can serve all, regardless of background, income, or capital development, and by using test scores as the only indicator of success, schools continue to charge forward blind to the needs of students, and staff stress increases when they continue to see gaps in achievement.

In the past several years in Norman, I have felt this increased stress. We continue to implement new intervention systems aimed to increase scores on tests while also implementing new accountability for teachers in an effort to control the instructional work they do in classrooms. I have looked for measured outcomes while

increasing my pressure of control on their practices within their classrooms. During my first five years at Alcott middle school, I led discussions of student growth, forcing teachers to ignore the specific background of the student, arguing that if we just teach *more effectively*, we will see the results we want. I remember one meeting where a social studies teacher was describing all the interventions she had tried in the past with one student. She listed individual tutoring, differentiation of lessons, multiple methods of instruction, even traveling to the student's home to work with him there. I remember her crying during our exchange, as her passion for meeting the needs of the student was continuing to seem futile. My response, ignoring all social or cultural development unique to his family circumstances, was matter-of-fact. I asked her simply, if the student did not score advanced on the end of year assessment by the state, what if she were to be fired? Would she change anything she was doing right now to help this student? I expected her answer to be no, but was surprised by what she said. She replied that she would do things differently, but that she did not feel there was enough time in the day for her, her family, and the student, to accomplish what would be needed. Her response was sincere, and because of my lack of understanding of the true purpose of schooling while considering all the needs of the student, I was derogating the abilities of a master teacher.

This focus on scores alone is not limited to Alcott. Schools across the U.S. now are suffering from the same control mechanisms in the name of accountability. In my experience the stress seems to be reaching a tipping point both in schools and political arenas. Teachers claim that parents are unsupportive, administrators argue there are too many unfunded mandates for accountability, and legislators state that schools continue

to suffer with poor teaching. Groups continue to blame each other for poor performance, all while giving insufficient consideration to the underlying issues of capital and its development. But in pockets, we are beginning to see community schools develop, embracing ideals and creating environments accountable to holistic growth. If fact, what is occurring in community schooling is addressing an opportunity gap while at the same time addressing an achievement gap. Several community school models have emerged in the U.S., and an analysis of these can be found in Appendix 1.A. of this dissertation. Two models, the Harlem's Children Zone and the Children's Aid Society, both seek to embrace the holistic approach of child development through schooling, but take slightly different paths to achieve their goals.

The Harlem's Children Zone emphasizes a development model that can be duplicated in any area of implementation, and embeds services designed to meet the social and emotional developmental needs of the students. Considering unique circumstances surrounding the child, the HCZ strives to create a central hub of community involvement and capital development through the services it initiates in schools.

The Children's Aid Society also brings a holistic approach to child development from within schools, but does so through a partnership with each community, so the specific implementation may look different from place to place. Also bringing services and initiatives designed to foster growth socially and emotionally, the CAS assists schools in designing environments inclusive of the needs of students and families while considering their levels of capital development. Models may be different depending on location and need, and with each developed community school it is the partnership of

the school to community that is the primary focus of the CAS. In all cases of successful community school implementation, schools consider the needs of the child, and do not rely solely on accountability scores to determine success.

The various forms of capital, their interrelations, and impacts on student growth had not received the attention due them in my leadership. I had ignored their importance, and led under the auspice of achievement scores at all costs. Even through the first years at Longfellow Middle School while developing the health clinic, I still assumed the role of benevolent dictator, pushing my specific beliefs and thoughts of success onto the students, parents, teachers, administrators, and community. My path to understanding the needs of students and community came through my research noted here, but it started long before, unknown to myself. The path to this enlightenment began on the roads of Norman, one step at a time.

Scott Beck, principal at one of the two high schools in Norman, lives a few houses from me. About three years ago we started running together each morning, and conversations while running quickly turned into professional development sessions. We discussed all matters of schooling, from the day-to-day operational needs of a school to the philosophical underpinnings of why schooling is vital. I recall many discussions leading to frustration on my part when we discussed the needs of students. It was my belief that it was our ethical and moral responsibility to impose our educated viewpoints onto the uneducated students, and through them to their parents, in order to create a better society for us all. I felt that by achieving our status both as leaders of a school, and our further development through advanced coursework, it was our job to

develop students in this way. Scott would always reply the same, "Who are you to determine what the students, or their families, need?"

I disregarded his questioning every time as uncaring and unwilling to "fight the good fight" to enhance student development and ultimately society. It was only through his instinctive understanding of my own capital development and how that related to his own that he was able to engage me in challenging conversations, which ultimately led to me questioning my own views. Through this questioning, I sought understanding through coursework and research resulting in the humbling realization that not only am I not in the position to impose my beliefs upon students and their families, but more importantly that my limited understanding of all people around me and their unique circumstances making them who they are make me dangerous in a position of authority and power, if I attempt to help them inappropriately. Instructional leaders and policy makers might be wise to consider their impositions as well, as more mandates and accountability structures are placed on schools.

CHAPTER SIX

Year Three

Armed with a more well-rounded appreciation for creating an environment which would provide a holistic approach for students, year three of my tenure at Longfellow involved less action, and more careful consideration of what would most benefit students and families. I still held on to notions of freeing students "oppressed" by the social and economic conditions of their lives, but better understanding of unique capital development issues within the family and at school allowed me to search for more meaningful partnerships of development rather than top-down decision making influenced by my paternal instincts (Freire, 1968/2000). Our purpose in implementing the health clinic and ultimately a community school would be to provide all students the opportunity, through a responsive schooling institution, to develop a sense of self and a skill set necessary for credentialing, to allow for growth beyond their predetermined, and possibly foreclosed, future.

June 10, 2013: The New Deal

A few months had passed, and no mention of the health clinic had been made, neither by Brian Karnes now with Variety Care, nor any member of the superintendent's cabinet. I remained patient, knowing that broaching the subject too soon would result in the cancellation of the plan, but I was eager to find out if Dr. Siano had spoken with members of the board, and more importantly, if Variety Care had shared any interest in developing the clinic at Longfellow now that Brian was not in a role to make that determination.

I had read a few articles concerning Variety Care, and learned that it had recently been granted approximately $250,000 to renovate a space in Oklahoma City to create a clinic similar to what we were hoping to create at Longfellow. The price tag of the model in Oklahoma City concerned me; we had agreed on a venture that would require no financial backing from either partner when we originally discussed the plan with Dr. Siano. The only expenses were creating the door in the hallway, and possibly creating a wall within the lounge to separate the exam room from the waiting room. The rest would be provided by Brian, and use our existing water line to the faucet, as well as existing carpeting, cabinetry, and furniture. The age of the room and furniture within would not make it the ideal representation of a quality and welcoming atmosphere, but I felt it was more important to provide the service than to worry about aesthetics at that point. With Variety Care, it was unknown what space they would require, or if they wanted to partner with Norman Public Schools at all. I contacted Roger Brown and Holly Nevels to seek approval to meet with them to explore options moving forward, and they agreed that we could hold a meeting and report back to them information we gained.

Brian set an appointment with two members of Variety Care, and we met at Longfellow on the morning of June 10. Scott Burcher was comfortably dressed in slacks and a polo shirt. Carol Martin wore more professional attire, and both were carrying notebooks to take notes with. We met and quickly moved over to the lounge to discuss the plan we had developed the semester before. They listened while looking at the space, and spoke to each other quietly as we walked through the area. They both agreed that the space would be tight, but that they could make it work. They indicated

the need for two exam rooms, so we would need to split the space of the lounge in half to accommodate two rooms. They would have to move heat and air above to make sure both spaces had air flow, as well as plumbing to get water to both areas. One of the small bathrooms would need to be converted to a small lab, and all the cabinetry would need to be replaced. Their philosophy, they explained to me, was that if they were going to put a clinic in any space, it would not be a pieced together arrangement. The space would look just like an urgent care facility or a doctor's office by the time it was completed. While I was excited by the idea, I knew this would require financial support, and I was unsure if the school district would be willing to provide that kind of assistance. I took a leap of faith and asked who they envisioned providing the finances necessary to create such a space, and they smiled while dismissing the question, replying, "That's something we can work out later." The experience I had gained over the previous two years had taught me what that meant: negotiations, and whether or not Dr. Siano was still willing to negotiate a venture like this was unknown.

The meeting was positive; Brian was pleased at their willingness to move forward with the partnership. They would report back to the board of Variety Care, and contact Brian with more information within the next week or so; then we would see what steps to take next. I reported the information back to Holly and Roger, but was concerned how they would react to the new information regarding the requirements for the space now that Variety Care was involved with the project. To my surprise, they seemed to expect the news; it was clear, with their experience in the roles they had assumed, that this may be a natural progression of similar ventures with bond projects. Roger was clear in his expectations and information moving forward: if Variety Care

wished to create a new space, we would be happy to allow them to use our space. Whatever costs arose within that space would be the responsibility of Variety Care, not Norman Public Schools. He was resolved in his statement, and the message was clear: any funding required would be the responsibility of Variety Care, and if they were unwilling, the project would be over.

June 25, 2013: Culmination

From time to time, district personnel would visit the building to look at network connections, facility improvements, and other maintenance issues that regularly affect the school. Johnny Smart, Norman Public School's network specialist, visited us and informed me that he was going to be moving his permanent office over to Longfellow in the coming months. He seemed excited by this move, and was eager to begin moving in as soon as possible. I asked where his office was to be located, as I could not off the top of my head think of any space where he would fit in a permanent location. He replied that the small network room just off the lounge area of the science hall would be his home beginning in just a few weeks. I quickly replied that I did not think this space would be available for him, but did not give a reason why as I was still under the assumption that we were not speaking publicly yet about the health clinic. He seemed agitated by my response, and assured me that the decision had already been made at the district level, and he would be moving in soon.

I attempted to keep my composure as I repeated myself again, while not giving specific details as to why. His response was terse and he showed visible signs of frustration. I made a decision at that moment to divulge the plans moving forward, including Dr. Siano's motivation and support of the initiative by the door being created

within twenty-four hours of our meeting a few months prior. It was obvious when I explained how quickly the door was placed in the hallway, as well as Dr. Siano's apparent support, that Johnny knew his plans were in direct conflict with information he had learned from the district, as well as in conflict with his desire to utilize the space. He stated that, "we would see about this," and he left abruptly.

My experience gained from the teacher concerned about the modification of this space had taught me many things, one of which was knowing whom to contact, and how quickly, when a conversation like this had occurred. I immediately called Roger Brown and informed him of what had happened. He recommended we set a meeting with Johnny Smart, Delbert Potts, the head of maintenance for Norman Public Schools, and Brian Karnes to look at the space and discuss what options we had for developing a health clinic inside the space. We set the meeting for the morning of June 25.

We met in the lounge of the science hall early that morning, and in addition to myself, Roger, Brian, Delbert, and Johnny, Lyndon Berglan and Tracy Wright joined us as well. Lyndon and Tracy were both in charge of network development throughout the district, and had much knowledge concerning wiring of buildings and space requirements of servers, network access points, routers, and other electronic equipment necessary for wireless and wired Internet access on campus. I sensed tension before the meeting even began, and it became clear to me that it was Johnny's intention to present several issues that we had not thought of previously. It was my impression that he felt caught off guard with the idea of this development, and felt out of the loop in its development. I knew that inclusion and exclusion of stakeholders in a project development could create negative responses, so I wanted to tread carefully through this

conversation in order to help all members feel validated in their concerns and responsibilities in and around its creation.

We discussed the space necessary for the clinic, and members of the meeting commented about where they believed we could move some of the existing equipment to accommodate the needs of the space to be created. As the conversation progressed, Johnny brought up an interesting fact he had learned recently: he knew of a school district in another state that had experienced a lot of security issues and vandalism, and he advised that if we were going to try something like this, we should be aware of security risks to which we would be exposing not only the facility but the students of Longfellow.

At earlier moments in my experience developing this idea of community school, I would have been unprepared, flustered, and would have had no answers when confronted with information that Johnny had just delivered. It was at this moment that the culmination of the past three years of experience with teachers, district leaders, community leaders, combined with months devoted to research, brought a confident and explicit reply. I described community school initiatives both in the country and outside of the country, the development and nurturing of community inclusion into the school setting, and the partnerships gained by the process. I briefly outlined the human capital development of students, and the ability schools had to connect with parents in a way never experienced before by them, gaining trust and respect leading toward a more inclusive culture within the school walls. I described several specific implementation models and their limited exposure to security or vandalism, and noted while this isolated instance may have resulted in a negative result for the couple of people Johnny

had spoken with, the overwhelming majority of experiences in similar models around the world, both in similar settings and vastly different, including deep urban settings, had resulted in very positive outcomes, with little or no security issues affecting the students and facilities.

My response only took a few moments, but I was surprised at how calm and assured I felt during the exchange. As I finished I looked around the room. As I noticed Roger's smile, I realized that in that moment I had harnessed my passion, combined with my experience and knowledge, and assumed a leadership role that all others before had indicated I would need to take. It was up to me, not others, to drive this initiative forward, so many had said in meetings before this one, and it was right then that I realized how right they were. I heard Brian Karnes snicker under his breath, and he added quickly, "In my experience with Variety Care over the past few months, they have several clinics in downtown Oklahoma City, and have reported no vandalism or security issues. It appears that Peter's information may be correct." Again, he looked over at me and winked, but this time it was not because he knew he had just saved me from a tense situation, it was that he knew I had arrived at the leadership position I needed to be in in order to drive this project forward. The meeting was over, and as we left, Roger let me know that he would be speaking with Dr. Siano soon about moving forward with board approval.

August 5, 2013: Board Approval

Over the next month several iterations of a memorandum of agreement moved back and forth between the attorney for Variety Care and our school district attorney, Buddy Pendarvis. Dr. Siano spent time visiting with board members to brief them on

the idea we had developed, and in mid-July he informed us a proposal would be placed on the board meeting agenda for August 5. Almost two years before to the date, I had begun this journey with Katie Fitzgerald with CCFI, assured that we would have a center open by January of the following year, staffed with full-time employees and providing counseling and social services to students and families at Longfellow. Two years later, this phase did not include counseling or social work, but the idea of a fully functioning health clinic able to provide care to students, families, and community members was becoming a reality. The board offices for Norman Public Schools were under construction at the time, so on the evening of August 5 the board was to meet in the City Council chambers in the center of town. I invited Michelle Sutherlin to meet me there, and when I entered I saw her standing waiting, her excitement difficult to contain. I saw Brian Karnes inside the chamber, and sat next to him.

The board meeting began, and we waited patiently for the agenda to reach letter I: "Memorandum of Agreement with Variety Care Inc. to establish a health and wellness clinic/services located at Longfellow Middle School." When we reached that moment, Dr. Siano took a few moments to describe the efforts we had engaged in over the prior months, and outlined the benefits that providing the health clinic would have for students and their families both at Longfellow and for the entire district. He provided information regarding the extension of the existing partnership with Norman Regional.

Unlike with agenda items before it, the board took a moment to ask some questions, and they seemed genuinely interested in the health clinic development and what it meant for students. Brian offered to step forward and answer some questions, so

for a few moments he took the podium in the center of the room and explained the services Variety Care would be offering in the space. The board expressed their excitement about the possibility, and unanimously voted to approve the development of the health clinic. Two years later, it looked as though the opening date was going to become a reality. As the board moved on with other items on the agenda, and Brian had returned to his seat, he emailed me the latest information from Variety Care on what they were expecting for renovations and improvements to the space. I glanced at the proposal and saw that the bid totaled nearly $50,000. At that moment he leaned over and whispered, "We're going to need to see what, if anything, Norman can do with this." January suddenly looked more distant than ever.

October 31, 2013: Variety Care Field Trip

Not much progress had been made since the discovery of the bid amount for renovations to the space in the building. Norman Public Schools maintained a strong commitment to the development of the space, but Roger was unsure of what amount, if any, the district would be able to provide toward renovations. There were many projects in the district that had current priority, and the original agreement on the development of the clinic included some labor from the district but no financial responsibility. Variety Care also maintained a commitment to the project, but was unable to provide that amount of financial support, due to multiple projects currently underway around the state. Brian had applied to several funding agencies and pursued grant opportunities, and had thus far not been awarded any funds. He indicated a sense of confusion when he presented the idea to foundations, as they appeared to not understand the difference between the care provided through a health clinic and the

current services being offered by the school nurse in partnership with the hospital near Longfellow's campus.

We had a few meetings together and attempted to find ways to reduce the overall cost of the modifications to the space. Roger was working with maintenance to see what the district could provide in labor, and we continued to search for ways to reduce costs within the scope of the project. Andrew Rice, a board member for Variety Care, had asked several times for me to visit their main campus in Oklahoma City, but it was difficult for me to get away from school, so I had not yet had the opportunity to do so. He continued to express that he felt if I and other district leaders could see the campus in Oklahoma City, we would have a better understanding of the services Variety Care wished to provide the community of Norman, and he felt doing so would open up more opportunities for possible funding by the district. I managed to find a time that I could visit, but I was unable to pull any other district personnel away from their busy schedules on the date we found. I asked Michelle Sutherlin to join me, so on October 31, 2013, we drove up to their main campus.

As we pulled into the parking lot I looked at the size of the facility in front of us and said out loud, "This can't be the right place. This is too big." I was thinking out loud, and didn't realize that Michelle thought I was speaking to her, and she replied, "I think this is the right place, Peter." The building took up about a city block, resembling a cross between a large public school campus and a hospital system. There was a constant flow in and out of the doorways at the main entrance, up and down the large set of concrete steps that led to them. I walked up the steps, still unsure how this could possibly be the clinic Andrew had asked us to visit. As soon as the doors opened, I saw

him and several other people waiting for us, which confirmed the location. The lobby we were standing in appeared to be a renovated school, but only because of the artwork and brick work on some of the walls. The majority of the location looked to be new, high ceilings adorned with modern lighting, and artwork on the walls, and a seating area filled with welcoming comfortable furniture surrounded us.

I was instantly taken back to my visit to Children's hospital many years prior with my own son who had suffered an injury to his leg. I remember feeling such an immediate sense of trust in the environment, and the health care providers paid such careful attention to my son, I could not have asked for a better environment and care given the horrible circumstances we were confronted with at the time. This lobby felt similar to that day; it was incredible how welcoming it felt even at the entrance.

Andrew spent a few moments introducing us to some of the workers, specifically the head of the pediatric department, a young doctor full of energy and charisma. Without hesitation I asked him when he would be moving to Norman, which was received with laughter from the crowd. Andrew led us into the facility, and showed us multiple wings and floors, including dental services, eye care, medical care, adult health education rooms, new parenting classes, and counseling services. He explained that it was the goal of Variety Care to create a place worthy of the community in which people would feel comfortable and respected, and a place capable of providing quality care, in every area needed, to any individual who walked in the front doors. As I gazed at each room, wing, and floor, I felt as if my dream had been realized in a physical form. I could not understand how a place that had been so carefully crafted in my mind could be a real place, but I was witnessing it first hand at that very moment. It was a

surreal experience, and in that moment we were standing in a small area near a psychologist's office. I wondered to myself if they could truly realize my dreams and include a place for financial services for families, or perhaps legal aid. As they were speaking, I glanced over to other office areas in the hall we were in, and noticed on the doorway titles for financial aid and legal assistance. I leaned up against the wall as I began to black out, and could no longer see or hear. I could tell that Andrew and the others were talking to me, but I could barely see or hear them, so all I could do in the moment was nod, and hope that they didn't notice I was going to faint. It was truly a realization of my dreams to provide a space like this for the community in Norman, and now that I knew that the possibility existed, I had a renewed sense of purpose to achieve the goal.

When we returned to Norman, I immediately set up a meeting with Holly to share my visit with Variety Care, and urge her and others to visit with me in the near future. She agreed that it would be a good idea, and asked me to get back with her within the next few weeks to arrange the visit. Plans were again put on hold, however, as the priority of the district shifted to the upcoming bond election. With the focus on such a large initiative, there was little time to devote to the health clinic. Additional feedback from the city of Norman on the formation of the clinic in the space also increased the bid closer to $70,000, which caused more delays in its creation.

As the plans for the bond proposal neared completion, I took a moment to speak with Holly about the possibility of including the health clinic within the proposal. The $70,000 needed to create the facility was a one-time expense, and was certainly below the twenty million I had blurted out in one of my first meetings with Dr. Siano. After

meeting with him, she informed me that the district had hired a consultation firm to analyze the needs of the district and develop a ten-year priority list, and in the scope of the current needs of the district, the health clinic did not serve enough of a need to justify its inclusion in the bond proposal. In all decisions, Dr. Siano must consider the entire educational organization as well as the surrounding community when making decisions, and given this responsibility, including the health clinic initiative in the proposal was not in line with the current needs of the district (Howard, 2012).

As of this writing, we have just finished the bond election, where the community voted in favor of the $120 million bond by 84% of those casting ballots. We are extremely thankful for the community support, and have now been able to shift our focus to other initiatives such as the health clinic. The process is continuing, slowly but surely, and right now we are planning on meeting with the United Way again in the next few weeks to seek funding for the space. Our present day situation is not as exciting as I would hope, but the reality of change of this magnitude requires patience, of which I have learned much over the years.

Post Script: The End and Beginning

After this dissertation was all but completed, the United Way of Norman Board met and agreed to partially fund the health clinic at Longfellow Middle School. The district has committed to funding the remainder necessary for the clinic to be built. Three years of work and research resulted in the creation of a space to provide students and families health care services while at school. It is an exciting end to this narrative, but it is only the beginning of a new story involving the full development of a community school in Norman Public Schools. Over the next several years we will be

bringing more agencies and services to the students and families, allowing for the community to become a true partner in the development of students in a holistic manner. Reshaping what education looks like at Longfellow Middle School may help shift what education looks like across the state and nation, with a much needed refocus looking at all needs surrounding student growth.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Reflections and Implications

This chapter is my explanation of the school-based improvement process we have undergone in the past several years. Our journey as a school has resulted in many improvements, both in academic achievement indicators and in meeting the needs of students holistically. Through partnerships with the community, our vision of a community school will enhance the life chances of children as engaged, productive, successful, and educated adults. In order to accomplish these goals, the leader must maintain the operational needs of the school, meet the demands of accountability mandates, and possess a certain set of skills capable of navigating hurdles involving change.

Three years ago when I began my tenure at Longfellow Middle School as principal, I was tasked to evaluate the current issues surrounding the school, and provide district leaders with a plan for improvement. I began by looking at data points that I could find including attendance, behavior, standardized test scores, benchmark results, demographic information, and advanced course enrollment. I used data from the year prior to my beginning work as principal of the school, as it was the only information available to me at the time. I wanted to take this information and use it as a snapshot to begin formulating what would become our long-term site plan for the next several years at Longfellow.

Attendance during the 2010 school year was 94.4%. I initially noted that this was a high attendance rate, but wondered about the reasons why some students were not coming to school. We spent time speaking with students and parents in a fairly

unstructured manner to gain any information when students were absent. Anecdotally, we received some feedback: most attendance issues centered around illness, but some students were required to stay home to take care of siblings when parents could not. Some students stayed home by choice after their parents had left the house because they believed that neither their parents nor school would check up on them. Some students indicated that they simply did not like school, and their parents were not interested in forcing them to come.

In 2010, Longfellow students received a total of 643 behavior referrals, forms written by teachers and sent to administrators regarding negative behaviors by the students. Administration would respond with punitive consequences ranging from conferencing with the student, lunch detention, after school detention, or out of school suspension. In 2010, suspensions at Longfellow totaled 215 involving a total of 103 students. A majority of these suspensions were the result of physical contact of some sort, totaling 113 of the 215 suspensions.

Standardized academic achievement test scores included CRT results (Oklahoma Criterion Referenced Tests), EOI results (End of Instruction), and EXPLORE results (ACT readiness results). With the varied nature of CRT and EOI results as the state changed benchmarks for proficiency nearly every year, we decided to focus on EXPLORE results as our best indicator for student growth. In 2010 students scored an average of 13.7 in English (benchmark for college readiness defined by ACT was 13.0), 14.9 in Mathematics (benchmark for college readiness was 17.0), 15 in Reading (ACT benchmark was 16.0), and 16.5 in Science Reasoning (ACT benchmark was 18).

I spent the majority of my first year at Longfellow looking at the existing structures, schedules, and initiatives in and around student learning. The schedule was constructed much like the previous schools I had attended and worked in: two exploratory classes per grade level placed back to back, four core classes surrounding a 35 minute lunch period, and a 20 minute advisory period, where students would be provided announcements, team building exercises, district curriculum involving anti-bullying, and other non-core curriculum related activities. Teachers' plans aligned with current state standards and objectives, as well as district curriculum. While investigating grading practices, the staff was somewhat divided: some teachers' grades were based on performance on standards and objectives being assessed, while other grades were based on a combination of factors including performance on standards, work ethic, responsibility, ability to turn in work on time, attendance, supplies, and behavior in class.

The principals and counselors spent a great deal of time that year evaluating current practices, and working on new initiatives we felt could impact student learning in a positive way. After careful consideration, we decided that the current method of developing long term site goals was not sufficient. Current goals involved increasing math and reading scores on standardized tests by certain percentage points each year over a period of three to five years. We had already determined that we felt end of instruction state accountability tests were not accurate indicators of student learning, so we did not feel that aligning our site plan to those indicators was beneficial for the students at Longfellow. We wanted an approach focused more on the unique needs of each student, so we began by redefining our vision statement. As a staff, we decided

that the new vision would be simple, easy to remember, and focus on the top priority we felt was most important for students: All students learn.

Using this vision statement, we began changing existing structures to meet the needs of students. Prior to my second year, we had not developed a way to diagnose learning issues within the student body. We wanted to find a way to identify students who were at risk of dropping out before graduation, so by looking at trend data from the high school and Longfellow, we identified several areas that when combined may indicate a student at risk of dropping out. These areas included attendance rates below 90%, failure on a standardized test, identification on the free and reduced lunch program, more than five referrals in a year, or meeting retention (failing one or more quarters in the year in a class). If a student met two of the five indicators we considered the student at risk of dropping out in the future, and if a student met three or more indicators we considered the student highly at risk of dropping out. Once we had the students identified, we then looked for ways to intervene with them appropriately.

One consistent concern from teachers was that they never felt they had enough time outside of class to help students. Advisory was used for team building and other activities, and lunch was just long enough for students to eat and get back to class. We decided to modify the schedule so that the lunch period was extended to 50 minutes, and in place of advisory, we shortened passing periods throughout the day, lengthened the time of advisory to a regular class period length, and used that time for intervention in reading and math, as well as a class we named "extensions" for those not needing intervention. During the extra time at lunch, teachers could bring students to their classes to work on homework or specific standards that the students were struggling

with. In most schools, the schedule allowed for a "skills enhancement" class, which was usually a year-long course to build skills in particular subjects (usually math and reading).

Placement in these courses was generally a result of the prior year end of instruction state mandated assessment results. If a student scored below proficient on math or reading, he or she was placed in this skills class for the year to be provided extra supports. In my experience, students placed in these courses felt like they had been labeled "stupid," and thought that no matter how they could demonstrate proficiency, there was no way out of the class until the following year if they received a better score on the test at the end of the year. I felt this created a "no way out" mentality for students, who generally did not wish to be in that class to begin with. In response to this stigma, while also not having any data indicating that students placed in these skills classes ultimately achieved any higher scores on their tests, we decided to make this intervention time more fluid. Teachers would use formative or summative assessments on specific learning objectives in their classes to determine placement in intervention. If students scored low on an assessment, they would be placed with the same teacher during a separate hour in a class not to exceed ten students to work on that specific objective. When the student achieved proficiency on that objective determined by the teacher, that student would return to their regularly scheduled class during that time. The timeframe was determined by the student: if he or she exhibited proficiency after a day of instruction and work, then the student would return to class the next day. If it took longer, then the student would stay longer. While this created logistical issues for the staff, it resulted in significant gains.

In the second year at Longfellow, benchmark scores were improving, scores on CRT and EOI were improving, and EXPLORE results were rising as well. By the end of my second year at Longfellow, the 2012-2013 school year, English had raised from 13.7 to 14.4; Math from 14.9 to 16.1, Reading from 15 to 15.5, and Science from 16.5 to 17.4.

Another concern from the staff was the lack of time available to collaborate. Again, we changed the schedule and created time every day for teachers of the core subjects to collaborate for a full class period. The collaboration time was focused on creation of learning goals, assessments, plans for intervention if students did not understand the material being presented, and plans for students if they did understand the concept, or completed their work faster than other students. We were able to hire additional personnel that included an instructional coach, who facilitated these collaboration meetings every day, and worked with teachers in their classrooms to improve instruction and student learning.

At the most poignant moment of my second year, we reviewed the number of students we identified at the beginning of the year as at risk for dropping out, and then looked at the number at the end of the year in the same grade. When the year began, we had identified 63 sixth graders at risk of dropping out before their senior year in high school. At the end of the school year, that number had been reduced to 28 students. We had cut the number of students at risk (by our definition) in over half, in just one year. When we thought about what that meant for the future we were even more excited: if we could reduce the sixth grade number to 28, as that group of students moved to the seventh grade and eighth grade if we could continue that trend, within

three years we would have almost no students identified at risk by the time they moved to the high school. By modifying the school schedule, focusing on a singular, and very simply stated vision, diagnosing individual student problems, providing flexible intervention time, and creating time for teachers to collaborate with one another, we had accomplished in one year what I had not seen in all my years prior as an administrator.

This year, my third year at Longfellow, we continued with previously established structures and processes, and focused more on extending learning for high achieving students. We felt that we had found a way to create an environment where the needs of students with academic gaps were being met, but also felt that our high achieving students needed just as much intervention and were not being provided those opportunities for growth. With a new gifted resource coordinator on staff, she and the administrative team developed and implemented a new plan for those students identified as gifted, with the hope that after a year of implementation, we would be able to use the model school wide for any student showing mastery in a particular area. We felt that by starting with the smaller population, we would be able to address any significant issues so we could better handle the large numbers of the student body in the following years.

The plan for our students identified as gifted included several segments. Each student completed a survey once a week to determine feelings of teacher responsiveness, adequate instruction in class, feelings of efficacy and beliefs about the quality and quantity of work, and that information would be shared with the teacher to allow for modifications in teaching if needed. Each student chose an academic team to participate in including robotics, National History Day, Model UN (United Nations),

competitive writing, Science Olympiad, and other academic teams. Finally, each student developed a portfolio including research surrounding a topic of his or her choice. Once the topic was researched and presented to a team of teachers, that student would be paired with a professional in the area he or she had researched. For example, one student may develop a portfolio involving aerodynamics and flight, and after presenting to staff, we would pair that student with a pilot so that they could work on a project together, outside of school. The results of this partnership would be shared among students, teachers, and parents at the end of the school year. This is the first year of the gifted plan implementation, and as of now we have not had students complete their initial portfolio to present to staff, but we are hoping by the end of the year to begin partnering with outside professionals to continue this plan. Beginning next year we hope to extend this plan to the entire school population, so that every student may engage in qualitative responses on classroom engagement and learning, have the opportunity to join an academic team of their choosing, and be able to develop a personal growth portfolio which extends their learning beyond the walls of the school.

Finally, as the state has continued to implement new accountability mandates with little or no funding to support these new control mechanisms, we have searched for a more thorough way to analyze student learning at Longfellow to show all stakeholders a more complete picture of how we are working on improving ourselves as a school. We decided to utilize the multi-dimensional approach outlined by Corrigan and Grove (2011), first by surveying our students, faculty and parents with their analysis tool, then develop short and long term plans to address issues raised from the data collection process. Based on the seven analyzed dimensions of education--1) community

engagement, 2) curriculum expectations, 3) developmental perspectives, 4) educational attitudes, 5) faculty fidelity, 6) leadership potential, and 7) school climate--we have proposed several new structures throughout the building to address needs within these dimensions in the coming years.

With the continued development of specific interventions, extension plans and allowing time for collaboration with teachers within the school day, and by viewing the school through a multi-dimensional lens rather than using state mandated test scores as our only indicator of growth and overall school performance, we have seen continued improvements on indicators that we are tracking. In the past three years, students have increased scores in every category of the EXPLORE assessment. We have continued to reduce our students identified at risk for dropping out. Benchmarks and state assessment results continue to improve each year. On almost every indicator that involves student learning, we are seeing strong improvements across the entire school. While several years in the past Longfellow has been placed far below the top performing schools in the district, we are now the top performing school in many areas, or one of the top two or three. We are enjoying success shown by our students, parents continue to share appreciation of our efforts and focus on student learning, and praise our teachers often. This tremendous improvement over the past three years would not be possible without the collective effort of teachers, staff, administration, district leadership, parents, and the surrounding community. I am honored to be working with such fine professionals, and I aspire to be a better principal every day because of their unending commitment for student improvement.

Many principals I often speak with across the state share stories far different from mine. They share continued decrease of state assessment results, unfunded initiatives by the state that they cannot sustain in their buildings, benchmark scores are either stagnant or decreasing, and behaviors in the school are taking so much of their time they have little left to devote to effectively supervising and evaluating teachers. They share their feelings of being overwhelmed, micromanaged by both their district leaders and the state, and feel that the pressures of the job are far greater than their abilities. I believe that given the current pressures involving the roles and responsibilities that the principal must carry in the current state of public education, to be effective in the job, one must be willing to work extraordinary hours, be able to juggle a constant barrage of interruptions and issues within the building and outside the building, all while developing meaningful structures and processes within the school to allow for the growth of everyone who is invested and has a stake in our endeavor. The struggle to accomplish this should not be overlooked or underappreciated. However, to be truly effective at creating an environment for lasting change that affects students for a lifetime, this is not enough. A principal must be willing to see past the mandates, past the requirements of the job in its current state, and past the accountability measures placed on him or her each year. The principal must allow theory to inform practice and the immediacy of practice to inform local constructed knowledge and know-how, and work on meaningful change that can affect student, family, and community.

In order to better illustrate this idea, picture a single fictitious student attending Longfellow Middle School. Scott, a current 7th grader, has struggled for many years in school. He reads approximately at a third grade level, and exhibits many negative

behaviors during the school day, resulting in several referrals and days of suspension. His home life is a struggle as well: his father is not part of the home, and he has two siblings, both younger than he. His mother works often, and he is forced to stay home many days to care for his younger siblings instead of attending school. He is left alone until well past sundown each day while his mother works, so he must provide meals for his siblings as well as himself, then he is left to himself to prepare for school the next day, or entertain himself on whatever electronic game he has in the house or other unstructured and unsupervised activity.

Understanding the paternalistic instincts of adults charged with educating students including staff, teachers, administrators, and district leaders is vital when creating plans they feel are best for students. They must be willing to form true partnerships, free of oppression, and engage in a mutual symbiotic relationship (Freire, 1968/2000). While our instinct is to mandate what Scott "needs" in school to provide him a "better" life, we must resist these tendencies, and work to partner with Scott, learn his needs and wants, and develop a plan together to allow him to begin trusting the public school system, and eventually other systems which honor his beliefs and values, rather than imposing others.

Teaching Scott within the walls of the school is not enough. We must seek resources and aid outside the school, coordinate those services, and bring them back into the school so that he may flourish beyond the limitations of assessment data. The credentialing system of public education must work with all community agencies and services to develop his social and cultural capital beyond the limitations of his current status (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1987).

Creating these structures within the school setting to accommodate this partnership between the larger adult world and child is messy business. School organizational structures, leadership styles of principals, responsibilities and actions of teachers, and models of holistic human development all must be addressed appropriately when identifying the needs of the child and addressing them adequately. Extending relationships beyond the school walls and involving the community into the process is necessary to meet the needs of the whole child, and coordinating that effort requires skill and effort on many managerial and leadership levels (Howard, 2012).

In the current environment of public education, it is almost impossible to maintain a status quo, much less initiate change impacting students in a positive and life-changing way. Persistence and an unwillingness to accept "no" are required, sometimes over many years of unending roadblocks and hurdles (Gladwell, 2000). Principals must be willing to continue down the path they feel is right, regardless of the amount of bureaucracy and political perceptions and repercussions; never to feel defeated or accepting "no" for an answer. The tenacity I brought to this experience, while raw and unfocused, through development, experience, and research has brought me on the brink of developing a community school model at Longfellow Middle School. While the process has not ended here, only with this undying force of will may it finally be implemented, able to fully help students (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). The result of these efforts will be realized in watching countless students grow through a more engaged and responsive schooling process, able to live a full and enlightened future.

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Appendix 1.A. Community School Models

According to the Coalition for Community Schools, community schools "purposefully integrate academic, health, and social services; youth and community development; and community engagement—drawing in school partners with resources to improve student and adult learning, strengthen families, and promote healthy communities" ("Coalition" 2009, p. 1). Community schools bring higher achievement scores, decreased dropout rates, higher attendance, improved behaviors, and increased parent involvement. Families increase stability, communication with teachers increases, school involvement increases, as well as a greater sense of connection and responsibility for learning by parents. Neighborhoods grow as well, increasing safety, pride, and connection to each other ("Coalition" 2009).

Samberg and Sheeran (2000) compiled a group of community school models through the Coalition for Community Schools in 2000. They note the key principles of a community school involving strong partnerships, shared accountability, high expectations, building on community strengths, embracing diversity, and an individual approach to the needs of children. Community schools are open to students and community seven days a week, all year long. Through a partnership between the school and community agencies, programs and initiatives promoting student growth are developed and implemented. Before and after school programs are available, as well as medical, dental, and mental health services. Samberg and Sheeran recommend a coordinator who oversees all activities and initiatives in the community school (Samberg & Sheeran 2000).

Samberg and Sheeran (2000) describe many different models of community schools throughout the nation including the Beacon schools, full service schools, public school implementation models, healthy start and after school partnerships, Communities in Schools, Extended Service Schools Initiative, Children's Aid Society, and many others. While the common threads include partnerships with community, engaging student growth and fostering health and wellness in schools and neighborhoods, each group has a unique approach, specific to the area and community. Almost all schools reported increased achievement, increased graduation rates, decreases in behavior, and increased communication between community and schools. Differences included specific measures like programming for senior citizens, vocational training, adult literacy programs, crisis intervention, technology implementation, recreation, family supports, reading clubs, summer enrichment, homework help, and many others. The Coalition for Community Schools provides a foundation and support system under which communities and schools can develop unique plans specific to the needs of the children there (Samberg & Sheeran 2000).

The Children's Aid Society strives to help students in poverty thrive and succeed through support systems in New York. Serving children for over 150 years, the society works with families and communities to develop children through health care, academics, athletics, arts, housing assistance, and counseling. The Children's Aid Society claims initiating programs such as the free lunch program and visiting nurses to schools began in their system ("Children's Aid," n.d.). It focuses on the community school model of connecting families, community, and schools together to provide

comprehensive services to children and parents, adapting to the needs of children as society changes.

The Children's Aid Society defines a community school as a strategy, not a physical building. It is an organization of supports and resources inside and surrounding a school, forming partnerships between the school and community services. Schools become the center of the community, day or night, all year round, and incorporate health services, academics, supports and services. In a partnership with the New York Department of Education, there are currently 16 community schools located throughout the area. The schools focus on instruction, enrichment, and supports to allow students to grow both academically and socially. Since its beginning in 1994, the Children's Aid Society has facilitated the development of over 15,000 community school adaptations both in the United States and around the world, and is an active member of the Coalition for Community Schools ("Children's Aid," n.d.).

In a report titled "Building a Community School" published by the Children's Aid Society (2001), the CAS's philosophy begins by focusing on the school as an institution focused on student achievement. Through partnerships with the community and families, supports can be created and delivered through the school to enhance learning. Students do not progress through school in isolation from their family and community, and these connections must be addressed to develop the child. Increases in poverty, educational inequity, widening of the achievement gap, changing family patterns, inadequate community supports, changing demographics, and concerns regarding violence in schools have increased the need for more supports in school as students grow. Community schools in the CAS model provide services and supports

outside the school day, allowing students to develop talents and form relationships in a supportive environment. Partners in the New York CAS community schools include local universities, hospitals, businesses and cultural centers to provide health, mental health, dental, academic, arts, sports, parent support and adult education services. While each community school develops its own unique systems based on need, they are all under the New York City Board of Education. These schools are not alternative nor charter schools, they are schools within the school district with the same expectations and accountability measures in place ("Children's Aid," 2001).

Extended learning opportunities found outside the school day in the centers are not created to replace instruction within the classroom, they are designed to support and enhance the educational experience students are exposed to during the school day. Programs are built around theme-based academics to provide real world connections to the learning during the school day. Learning academies have been implemented in some areas of the New York City CAS network, focusing on science, mathematics, and arts to create connections as well. This allows for an average of one-and-a-half extra hours of instruction outside the school day for students, the same as a full day of instruction extra per week. Tutoring and homework help is provided during these times as well ("Children's Aid," 2001).

In five schools in the New York City area, CAS community schools have developed integrated health services including medical, dental, and mental health clinics. These clinics eliminate the barriers that delay students and families from getting the health care they need. Elementary schools have clinics that include well-baby checkups for preventative approaches to their health, and identification of chronic

illnesses early allow for these health clinics to record and track progress throughout the students' educational experiences. With existing partnerships in nearby hospitals, students and families can receive primary care from the health clinics within the schools, and also be referred to the hospital or other areas if needed ("Children's Aid," 2001).

Mental health services are offered in seven community schools in the New York City area. Students and families are provided with short and long term individual, group and family counseling. Counselors, psychologists, psychiatrists and other mental health workers provide these services inside the school setting as partners rather than at separate clinics ("Children's Aid," 2001).

Programs for adults and families include family resource centers, parent workshops, adult education, health care access, and grandparent programs. These classes and support systems at times take place in hallways of the community schools due to insurance issues or bureaucratic hurdles. Results are discussed in the published book as well. Improved academic performance through reading and math scores, higher attendance rates both by students and teachers, increased positive school environments, decreased behavior incidents, increased parent involvement, and improved relationships between students and teachers are all noted in the report ("Children's Aid," 2001).

The report details how to create lasting partnerships with community organizations and families, and also outlines how to sustain those relationships. Issues that schools should be aware of before entering into partnerships include different work styles, not sharing a common educational language, having different priorities, the notion of viewing theses partners as "tenants" in the school rather than true partners,

and outside agencies not being receptive to efforts by the schools. Moving the community school model forward involves planning together from the start, clarifying the vision and mission, setting ground rules, assessing your core competencies, starting small and building gradually, involving parents early, sharing decision-making with all partners, preparing the team to work together, staying flexible, and continuing to develop the team's capacity ("Children's Aid," 2001).

The report outlines methods to assess strengths in the area where the community school is being developed. A comprehensive survey must be utilized, and data analyzed should include interviews of all members of the partnership. Data including demographics, resident issues and feelings, local leaders and human service professionals, knowledge of current community services offered, and future goals all must be collected and analyzed as well to determine options for creating the community school ("Children's Aid," 2001).

Finally, a brief discussion on planning your own community school is included in the report. Financial decisions and operational decisions must be made prior to creating the school. Services to be included, financing the program, timeline of implementation, and data measurement systems should be determined. Paying for the school, and creating a sustainable model are also discussed. Federal programs, fund raising, public relations, and advocacy all play a part in creating a sustainable community school that will continue to function regardless of management ("Children's Aid," 2001).

In an ActKnowledge evaluation of six CAS community schools in New York City, the longitudinal study showed significant gains in math and reading, statistically

greater than schools not implementing the community school model ("Research brief," n.d.). Data analyzed for these achievement gains included standardized test scores, school attendance records, and after-school program attendance. The study analyzed information over a three year period, and each school served African-American and Latino children living in low income communities. Behaviors referrals of students in the community school were less than those in non community schools, and the overall climate of the CAS community schools were reported as more positive than non community schools. Implications noted by the study point to policymakers at all levels in creating after-school programs and community schools to improve not only student achievement, but economic growth in the surrounding community as well ("Research brief," n.d.).

A study conducted by Philliber, Kaye, Herrling, and West (2002) evaluated the Children's Aid Society-Carrera Program focusing on preventing pregnancy and improving health care among teenagers. Six agencies in New York employing a year round after school program including a youth orientation, and odds of current sexual activity, use of a condom with a hormonal contraceptive, pregnancy and access to health care were monitored. Results indicated decreased teenage pregnancy for those students in the program. The researchers concluded that males may benefit from earlier education than their teenage years (Philliber et al., 2002).

The goal of the Harlem's Children Zone is to "Break the cycle of generational poverty in Central Harlem and change the odds for the whole community" ("HCZ," n.d., p.1). Through a system of supports from birth through college, the HCZ aims to increase high school graduation and college rates and create a healthy and educated

work force. The HCZ's informational document indicates 73 percent of children in Harlem are born into poverty, 36 percent of adults have not completed high school, and unemployment is 3 times that of the city surrounding it. Through the model implemented in the HCZ, it claims in less than a decade that parents are now supportive of their children's cognitive development, children are more prepared for school, achievement is increasing, and graduating rates are increasing ("HCZ," n.d.).

Tough (2004) explains Geoffrey Canada's idea as head of the HCZ as "instead of helping some kids beat the odds, why don't we just change the odds" (Tough, 2004, p. 2). In an area where systems did not exist to change housing projects or schools, only pockets of individual students, Canada strives to create sustainable change and break the poverty cycle. His belief that fixing schools alone are not enough, the system must include helping families and community, as well as the schools, in order to create this sustainable success. In addition to educational initiatives in the HCZ, social and medical services are provided for students and families. Canada speaks to prioritization when determining needs for families by explaining that if he spent all his time focusing on working increasing duel income family levels, or by helping kids get married later and stay in a marriage he wouldn't get anything else done. His ultimate goal is not to focus on the issues in Harlem, but create a model that can be implemented across the nation, by reforming education and programs that aren't producing results. Navigating politics and unions is difficult, especially with a current model of creating a school where Canada can fire employees at will based on his level of expectations (Tough, 2004).

Page and Stone (2010) outline the model of the HCZ, as well as provide recommendations for educators and policy makers to create similar children's zones across the country. Pipelines throughout the pre-k to college experience include entry points at all levels to help ensure students are not lost in the system. The HCZ provides several after school programs, and free education through their charter school. For those not participating in the charter school, case managers are assigned students and additional classes are offered to students to supplement their current education. Programs are offered throughout high school including fitness, health, arts, media, and computer literacy. Community programs are offered to families and community outside the school setting including parenting classes, reading classes, health counseling, crisis intervention, financial services, and drug/alcohol prevention (Page & Stone, 2010).

Page and Stone (2010) outline services provided by the HCZ that they believe can be replicated in other neighborhoods to create similar results. With support from the private sector, charter schools can be created, evaluation and data systems created and implemented, and Promise Neighborhoods can be created similar to those in Harlem. The HCZ recommends flexibility when attempting to replicate these neighborhoods as unique situations may require experimentation, however they also note that if huge variations in goals and services outlined by the HCZ are implemented, evaluations will become more difficult. As Page and Stone note, "Having similar core characteristics will allow cities to learn from each other's efforts and successes" (p. 10). This can be achieved by developing similar pipeline entry points, but address specific neighborhood and community issues dependent on their unique situations (Page & Stone, 2010). An example for the Harlem area is an asthma treatment program based

on data indicating that 16 percent of parents surveyed indicated their children had asthma (Northridge, Jean-Louis, Shoemaker, & Nicholas, 2002). Early childhood services, combined with preschool, primary, secondary and post secondary programs should be selected based on their levels of success, although no specific programs are outlined in this presentation. The model of Promise Neighborhoods is built on the partnerships between the private and public sector, where both can mutually benefit each other (Page & Stone, 2010).

In May of 2010, Dobbie and Fryer, Jr. published a study examining the effectiveness of the HCZ. Their results indicate that the Promise Academy charter schools in HCZ help increase student achievement for low-income minority students (Dobbie & Fryer, Jr., 2010). Through recruitment of high quality teachers, and use of "test-score value-added measure to incentivize and evaluate current teachers" (p. 6), the focus of teaching in the charter school is prioritized over administrative tasks. The schools provide free health services, incentives for achievement, and activities emphasizing the importance of work ethic. The results also indicated some surprising information: by analyzing data from siblings not involved in the charter schools but still participating in the community initiatives, Dobbie and Fryer Jr. (2010) concluded that achievement scores may be improved by quality schools alone, regardless of community supports.

The Harlem's Children Zone relies on a similar model where schools are created or transformed. Unlike the Children's Aid Society, the HCZ strives to duplicate results by using the same model, regardless of differences in surrounding communities. The CAS model incorporates unique aspects of the community when developing community

schools, which may lead to varied results when measuring outcomes. The HCZ model, while consistent, does not allow for deviation away from the established model. The strict adherence to this model may not address needs of individuals within the school in an effort to maximize performance indicators.

The mission of the Educational Trust ("Trust," n.d.) is to promote high achievement for all students, from pre-k through college. The Trust specifically focuses on low income, Black, Latino, and American Indian students and families in an effort to close the achievement gap between these groups and those of high performing peers. Through analyzing data, partnering with local schools, and lobbying politicians and policy makers, the Educational Trust seeks to understand gaps in achievement and opportunity, and provide resources and assistance to transform those students underperforming to students prepared for college and the work force beyond. The Educational Trust focuses on educating youth in order to allow low-income students and minority students to perform as well as affluent non-minority students. The trust believes that "schools and colleges, appropriately organized, can help virtually all students master the knowledge they need to succeed" (p. 1). The Educational Trust also focuses on factors outside the school, and by strengthening education for low income and minority groups, it will strengthen America ("Trust," n.d.). In the literature reviewed here, The Educational Trust appears to focus on financial appropriations by analyzing how districts and students receive funding, minority representation in graduation rates, and goals by schools and states.

Parent education regarding these issues is promoted through the Education Trust. In an informational article published by the group in 2011, the trust outlines six

topics in hopes to bring access to parents of all incomes ("Parents," 2011). Achievement involves state testing results and report cards; the group urges parents to look beyond averages and find information for subgroups. Graduation rates for high schools, as well as knowledge of college preparatory classes, advanced placement courses, and SAT or ACT scores are important for parents to know as they make decisions about their children in schools. Climate of schools is important, including behavior reports and attendance reports, should be analyzed by parents. Teachers have the most impact on student learning and achievement. Parents should have information available regarding the teachers' credentials, experience, and how many first-year teachers a school has. District information including school level report cards, student counts, attendance rates, accountability measures, and the percentage of classes not taught by highly qualified teachers are regarded important by the Education Trust when determining effectiveness of a district. Finally, according to the informational brochure to parents from the trust, comparisons of how much the district spends per student at one school versus other schools is important as well ("Parents," 2011).

In the next several years, increasing both college-going and college-completion rates will increase due to initiatives set by President Obama (Engle & Lynch, 2009). While gaps between white and minority college-going and college-completion rates have increased, new metrics determining access and success being developed will greatly help address the problems schools are facing today. Student profiles, expenditures per student, and diagnosing specific subgroup population issues toward graduation will enable schools to adjust programs and spending to accommodate needs where they develop (Engle & Lynch, 2009).

Hall (2007) outlines two main issues surrounding improving accountability for high school graduation. Goals by states are far too low, and by using averages of student groups, specific improvement areas are not specified and overall data is not beneficial to addressing the problem of minority students graduating at higher rates. State goals include very low expectations of increases, while some states define improvement as any progress at all, without a measurable goal specified. By setting explicit goals for individual students, and setting rigorous goals, states are able to see greater outcomes than states that do not (Hall, 2007).

In February of 2013, the Educational Trust released a report outlining a proposal to restructure the federal financial aid system to benefit college bound low-income students (Dannenberg & Voight, 2013). With college attendance of low-income students nearly 40 percent below that of upper income students, this redesign aims to provide assistance while allowing the student to be relatively debt free upon completion of college. The design calls for a reduction of money spent on families that don't necessarily need it, and shift it to those that do, by moving approximately $24 billion from existing federal programs to state level programs to increase college attendance and completion (Dannenberg & Voight, 2013). In a technical appendix released by the trust in 2009, metrics of determining success and financial expenses were released comprising of information from Pell Grant recipients, as well as census information and federal poverty levels ("Metrics," 2009). Results are based students using Pell grants who obtained bachelor's degrees compared to students of non-Pell students within cohorts. Access is also addressed in these metrics, comparing bachelor's degree cohorts and high school graduation populations ("Metrics," 2009).

The plan also outlines responsibilities of students, including successfully completing a college preparatory course in high school, commit to attend college full time and work or serve in the community an average of 10 hours per week, pay a fair portion of college expenses based on the amount that their family can afford toward college costs, and make progress and complete a certificate or degree in a pre-determined period of time. All students stand to benefit from this redesign; middle and upper class students will pay less in college fees and loans (Dannenberg & Voight, 2013).

Hall and Ushomirsky (2010) discuss economic funding gaps in their analysis of Title I funds and their distribution to high poverty schools. While it appears that funds are granted to schools in high poverty so that students in these schools are given more opportunity for resources, the averages in district expenses don't tell the whole story. Because of teacher pay, some schools receive more money based on veteran teaching experience, so schools that possibly have a higher poverty rate may receive less in state and federal aid due to teaching experience within the building. This trend is perpetuated as more high poverty schools employ teachers with less experience and fewer advanced degrees. Hall and Ushomirsky (2010) state that while equalizing teacher salaries will help, it is not the only reason that a gap exists between schools. The pressure to spread funds equally among title I schools and non title I schools, so where resources are spent in needed areas, districts will use other funding mechanisms to equal those payments to low-poverty schools (Hall & Ushomirsky, 2010).

The Children's Aid Society works as a partner agency with the Coalition for Community Schools. Both the CAS and the Coalition aid communities and schools

develop unique programs best suited for the area where they are being implemented. Stakeholders in the school and community develop needs assessments, and the members of the community partnering with the school implement the programs and work to sustain them. Common threads include increasing student achievement, providing time before and after school, providing medical, dental, and mental health services, however the schools and communities determine other programs and initiatives, best suited to their needs.

The Educational Trust focuses primarily on low-income minority students, and works with community agencies to develop policies to increase funds to help support these groups of students. Where the Coalition and CAS seek to improve students in areas regardless of income level or race, the Educational Trust focuses more on these groups in an effort to close the achievement gap between low-income minority students and affluent non low-income students. Similarities include goals of the groups: increase student achievement, attendance rates, college going and college completion rates, and reduction in behaviors within schools by partnering with community agencies to provide services. The Educational Trust has created a specific plan to increase funding for these initiatives and is promoting that model nationwide, where the Coalition and CAS appeal to local government agencies as a partner with the community and schools to create funding mechanisms at the local level.

The Harlem's Children Zone also develops programs based on common principles of student achievement, increasing health for students and community, increasing attendance, graduation rates, and communication between parents and school. The HCZ is attempting to duplicate the model across the nation, utilizing a

similar structure in order to maintain fidelity and have common metrics when analyzing data for improvements. While the HCZ hopes that schools and communities will develop their own portions of the community school model within their areas, the foundational approach of the HCZ should remain constant. The HCZ's leader, charismatic and driven, is the driving force behind the model, and he continues to work to expand the network of supports so that as many students can be affected, in hopes to break the cycle of poverty within families.

Programs and initiatives designed to replace the social capital investments of families in local neighborhoods may fail in the long term if not carefully crafted considering how the lack of social, cultural, and economic capital of the family will have on long term relationships, or fostering a new generation of students. Are schools capable of replacing the investment of social and cultural capital historically held by parents? Are community efforts and partnerships with schools able to do the same, or once the student leaves the social setting of the immediate neighborhood and school without the familial investment, both economic and social, able to attain levels of capital that can be exchanged for economic gains? These questions appear unanswered, and only with further studies involving students after they leave these communities will more information be possible.

Appendix 1.B. Literature Review

The concept of community schools can be traced back to as early as the sixth century B.C. where in some areas, educational centers were the hub of social involvement (Smith & Smith, 1994). In Roman education, learning was closely tied to the family, and the mother assumed the responsibility of educating the children. While educators like Cicero believed that education should be expanded in schools, he also emphasized the need for parental involvement, and the need for parents to instruct their children in Latin and educational fundamentals before expanding their education. Quintilian believed that teachers should educate students as a parent would, and most families spent a great deal of time educating their children, at least for a period of time, before they sought out other opportunities for educational growth (Smith & Smith, 1994).

In The Institutio Oratoria of Quintilian, he discusses the fundamentals of education, as well as "rhetoric" in which he describes the necessary ways in which to properly speak the "truth" (Butler, 2007). He describes the necessity to care for young in their education to bring out their strengths, and enhance their learning as a father would for a son:

> …boys commonly show promise of many accomplishments, and when such promise dies away as they grow up, this is plainly due not to the failure of natural gifts, but to lack of the requisite care…The man who shares this conviction, must, as soon as he becomes a father, devote the utmost care to fostering the promise shown by the son whom he destines to become an orator. (Butler, 2007, p. 21)

In The Institutio Oratoria, Quintilian continues to describe the need for highly educated parents, and when parents are not educated, they should "show all the greater diligence in other matters where they can be of service to their children" (Butler, 2007) as their child progresses in education. This firm link between parental support and education is rooted in Quintilian's books in The Institutio Oratoria, and outlines the importance of parental support in education today.

In book two, Quintilian continues as he describes the need for teachers to assume the role not only to educate in reading and writing, but also morals (Butler, 2007), as a parent would. He urges parents to carefully choose those who teach their children to be moral educators,

> And should there be any father who does not trouble to choose a teacher for his son who is free from the obvious taint of immorality, he may rest assured that all the other precepts…will be absolutely useless to him, if he neglects this. (Butler, 2007, p. 217).

As educational philosophies changed in history, schools became a place where students could expand their knowledge, and while mostly reserved in very early education to men and the affluent, families sought out opportunities when they could to find ways to teach their children (Smith & Smith, 1994). Vittorino taught not only those who were wealthy, but also those with little money (Smith & Smith, 1994). Throughout these times, education was viewed as a very important aspect of life, and families, even those that sent their children away for education, still played an important role and partnership with tutors and learning centers. Erasmus emphasized the need for public education rather than tutoring in the home, but appealed to the Greek and Roman style

of creating these educational structures as centers for the community rather than separate entities not tied to the family (Smith & Smith, 1994).

In "The Education of Children," Erasmus spends a great deal of time speaking of the father and mother as a vital influence to the child's upbringing and education (Sherry, 2009). The connection to education and parental approval is discussed, and disgrace comes to those parents whose children are not wise. This strong bond between parents and the child emphasizes the need for a connection between schooling and family, as Erasmus indicates. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure their child is brought up with a strong education, in order to fulfill the needs of the family, and the pleasure of the parents. It is against the laws of nature to assume that the education of a child can be done without parental involvement, the parents are the only ones who can create an environment from which the child can learn (Sherry, 2009).

In the past two centuries, childrearing and family dynamics have shifted dramatically primarily due to economic exchange (Coleman, 1987). As economically productive activities shifted from inside the house to outside the house and community, through the industrial revolution, a new member of society was created: the modern corporation. As family members began working more outside the household, the need for public schooling increased, and the shift from a welfare system of internal household care moved to the community as an extension of the care system. Increasingly, more households with children have no earnings, and more households without children have duel incomes. As a result, the relative amount of distributed wealth of a family goes more to adults without children. Over time, this shift combined with perceptions of government provided college education, after school and summer

activities provided by schools, and domains of socialization including health education, sex education, financial literacy and other historically common family centered domains have led to more separation between family and schools (Coleman, 1987). The division of labor throughout these two centuries creates current implications for effective schools: policies must be created to compliment the division between families and schools, and connections must be made to benefit families at all social levels to provide environments able to enhance student learning.

Creating connections among relational networks, norms, and social trust form the foundation of social capital on which student learning can be enhanced (Goddard, 2003). Opportunities for information exchange through social relationships can create positive results aligned to goals of the community. Social capital used in the development of educational systems can also provide positive outcomes, although not widely used given the individualistic approach in these past two centuries. Coleman's introduction of social capital concluded the theoretical strategy of social relationships in the family and outside the family resulting in increased graduation rates (Coleman, 1988). Goddard's study included a sample of 45 random elementary schools with a total of 444 teachers and 2,429 students in 1998 (Goddard, 2003). Results indicated that schools characterized by high levels of social capital saw higher pass rates on math and reading standardized tests. Goddard states that the relationship to be modest, and possibly connected only to math and reading (Goddard, 2003). Increasing social capital to enhance student achievement involve creating connections and social trust through partnerships and involvement of community in schools.

When schools view students as children rather than students, they are more likely to embrace the idea of involving the entire family as a partner in the child's growth (Epstein, 2010). Through this, a caring environment can be established to enhance the student's achievement, his or her health, and needs for the future. As policies and practices are built around the entire family, the theory of how school, family, and community work together begin to change (Epstein, 2010). Epstein describes overlapping spheres of influence including school, family, and community partnerships guided by the forces of time, experience in families, and experience in schools (Epstein, 2011). In one specific example, these forces can seem to contradict: the majority of parents of an elementary school agreed that their school was doing well, however a large portion of them felt that teachers could do more to involve parents in the learning process (Epstein, 2011). Epstein outlines the importance of examining these forces and how they relate to the spheres of influence to increase student growth. Student encouragement focused on hard work can result in a higher likelihood for students to worker harder in school (Epstein, 2010).

As schools embrace the notion of the inclusion of the family and community, the idea of the community school emerges. Programs, services, curriculum, events, and structures change to better support the children both at school and at home. When these happen, "children experience learning communities or caring communities" (Epstein, 2010).

When support increases for the student and family, feelings of safety and security increase, resulting in more time and energy focused on learning and life goals. Support has different meaning to families, so open dialogue must be present in order for

students to feel secure. Conflict, debate, and differences must be confronted and resolved; without a strong partnership present problems will arise that cannot be overcome, and the student ultimately will suffer because of it (Epstein, 2010).

According to Epstein (2010), as students grow older, partnerships tend to decrease. While affluent communities tend to have stronger school and family partnerships, schools with a higher rate of poverty tend to base their interactions on problems the students are facing, rather than the positive accomplishments they have made. Single parent families and fathers are often less involved, and many schools profess their desire and ability to connect, but they do not have the proper skills to engage families and community, so little action is taken (Epstein, 2010).

Understand these challenges are vital before setting out to build a community school, and to develop structures with a purpose to overcome these obstacles. Almost all families and schools believe these partnerships are important, but many lack the specific tools or skills to work through creating tight bonds with families (Epstein, 2010). To help develop methods, Epstein discusses six types of involvement and sample practices. Parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with community include specific guides and resources designed to help schools formulate those necessary partnerships. She also discusses timelines for implementation, and benchmarks so that stakeholders can evaluate progress as they implement these involvement practices.

Ultimately, some teachers engage the student as a child rather than only a student, and work with the family partnership as well. The expectation of a community school is that all teachers and employees work on these same practices to allow for a

more comprehensive and sustainable environment. Creating "action teams" designed to assess growth, work on activities, examine needs and interests of students as well as families help ensure that these environments are created (Epstein, 2010).

As the idea of community involvement has continued to grow in schools, so have the various definitions of what a community school is and what it does. Dryfoos (2000) outlines many attributes that have been assigned to community schools, and presents the vision of a community school by using the Coalition for Community School's definition. The vision of a community school is open to not only students, but families and the surrounding community at all hours, all year long. A partnership is forged between these groups, and learning is fluid both in the classroom and out, using the school as the place of coordination between the groups (Dryfoos, 2000). The Coalition for Community Schools (2009) defines community schools similarly as a system to "purposefully integrate academic, health, and social services; youth and community development; and community engagement – drawing in school partners with resources to improve student…learning" (Dryfoos, 2000). Ultimately the goal is to achieve "quality education, positive youth development, family support, family and community engagement in decision making, and community development" (Dryfoos, 2000, p. 2). In "Inside Full-Service Community Schools," Dryfoos and Maguire (2002) discuss the differences between this definition and what a charter school system attempts to achieve. Community schools are created within the same traditional public school frameworks, and do not require a divergence from the already established system. Connections within various partnerships allow multiple services accommodating needs of students within the school (Dryfoos & Maguire, 2002).

Additionally, "holistic education" is examined where connections are made between a student and community, natural world, and values (Dryfoos & Maguire, 2000). Educators seeking to enhance learning with the whole child should develop instructional practices to address the diverse learning styles and needs of students as they grow (Dryfoos & Maguire, 2000).

Dryfoos (2000) discusses research on the effectiveness of community schools, including learning and achievement, improved social behavior, healthy youth development, better family functioning and parental involvement, enhanced school and community climate, and access to support services. In studies across many programs, gains were noted in achievement scores, family involvement, family functioning, access to community services, and school attendance. Decreases were noted in suspensions and high risk behaviors including drug use, teen pregnancy, and disruptive behavior in the classroom (Dryfoos, 2000). Harkavy and Blank (2009) cite research by Dryfoos as an independent researcher as well as data from the Academy for Educational Development, the Stanford Research Institute, the Chapin Hall Centers for Children and others indicating similar results. These results include higher achievement scores, improved attendance and behavior, and an increased involvement by parents in their child's educational life (Harkavy & Blank, 2009).

A report by the Casey Foundation outlines several key elements to building more effective community schools, similar to ideas already presented in this review. It also suggests specific roadblocks and pitfalls associated with creating partnerships among families and community. Fears about the inability of systems to change, lack of support, inequitable distribution of resources, dysfunctional bureaucracies, lack of

capacity, difficulties in expanding choices, barriers to engaging families, and other systemic problems may plague communities attempting to create bonds and increase social capital and the cultural and economic capital that can follow (Hill, Campbell, & Manno, 2000). These hurdles must be addressed openly, providing transparency as relationships are built to ensure sustainability.

Internationally, similar "full service schools" have been implemented and studied. These full service and extended schools intend to incorporate a strong core instructional program, enrichment activities, and health services (Cummings, Dyson, & Todd 2011). Results of this study did indicate that implementing these full service schools do have an effect on reducing social and educational disadvantages. However, a more important question raised by this study is necessary when identifying and implementing what may be viewed as a comprehensive "answer" to closing the achievement gap, and increasing overall student performance and social development: do full service schools or community schools provide society with all the answers to remove access issues to poverty, or are they the only answer to provide more "equal" societies? Cummings, Dyson and Todd pose this question so that we continue to remind ourselves that no initiative independent of a variety of other circumstances will ever be the only solution to the problems that society is faced with in helping students develop, particularly issues pertaining to *the opportunity gap* that are a result of much larger systemic inequality in a classed society. There are no blueprints, no cookie cutter answers to enhancing schools to help children; each situation is unique, and communities must face their own circumstances and partnerships when developing their own community schools. The full service schools that Cummings, Dyson and Todd

analyzed aimed to provide childcare, some increased adult learning centers, some increased communication with technology, and most offered a wide variety of hours for students and families to come in to the school (Cummings et al., 2011).

In May 2010, the Coalition for Community Schools published a report from several other cities including information improvements in several areas. This information was gathered from community schools around the nation between 2007 and 2010. Overall national results reported that schools with fully implemented "communities in schools" students scored higher in math and reading proficiency exams than students from other schools. California, New York, Chicago, Washington, and many other states and cities reported increased scores involving achievement data regarding standardized tests, graduation rates, behavior data, parental involvement, and college acceptance rates ("Communities," 2010).

Several studies have investigated specific outcomes regarding implementation of the community school model. In 2010, Curt Adams published an evaluation of the Tulsa Area Community School Initiative. His longitudinal study included both quantitative and qualitative methods, where data were collected from 2,130 5th grade students and 1,095 faculty in the Tulsa, Oklahoma area. Utilizing the Community School Development Scale developed by Adams, he identified results in cross boundary leadership; holistic programs, services, and opportunities; community-based learning; and family and community engagement (Adams, 2010). In this evaluation, Adams determined that no significant differences were found in math and reading achievement scores when compared to similar schools not involved with the implementation model. However, diffusion of the community school model showed significant achievement

differences between schools who had reached the mentoring and sustaining level of implementation and similar schools who had not implemented the model. Adams indicates that the effectiveness of the community school model reaches greatest outcomes when the model is fully diffused at the school level (Adams, 2010).

Adams investigated specific social conditions contributing to the differences in achievement among these schools, and found that student trust in teachers, and faculty trust in students and parents resulted in increases in average math achievement (Adams, 2010).

Epstein (2007) conducted a national study which shared similar outcomes. Family involvement, regardless of background, socio-economic status, cultural or educational background can increase their children's behavior and ability in school (Dittus, Epstein, & Michael 2007). Epstein discusses "overlapping spheres of influence" claiming that home, school, and community involvement combine influencing children and on their relationships (Dittus et al., 2007). Districts and schools utilize the six types of involvement to identify specific areas for families and community to focus on to increase learning, social, and health outcomes. With identified professional development strategies, faculty and staff must be able to adequately relate to families, build trust, and encourage partnerships and participation in school events (Dittus et al., 2007).

The Coalition for Community Schools "promotes the integration of academics, health and social services, youth and community development, and community engagement to improve student learning, strengthen families, and sustain healthier communities" ("Communities" 2007, p. 1). The School Health Policies and Program

Study from 2000 is identified as the first study to measure health programs and policies involving stakeholder groups including parent and community. This study is conducted every six years by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and involves questionnaires, data collections from respondents by interview, and received a 98% return rate from state samples. One hundred percent of the state education agencies responded on their questionnaires ("Communities," 2007).

Data analysis included data from district, school and classroom levels. These data were weighted to make required inferences regarding elementary, middle, and high school courses ("Communities," 2007). Results indicated that schools and districts offered "opportunities for families to learn about health education and physical education…27.7% of all schools offered general education on crisis preparedness, response, and recovery to students' families" ("Communities," 2007, p. 1). Communication with families and community was utilized throughout schools in the study, and procedures were in place to allow for communication in most schools. Over half of the schools had faculties that encouraged family volunteer time in the schools, and help with school trips or fundraising opportunities. Over 80% of the schools had some or all of the faculty involved with sharing learning at home strategies with families and community. Many schools provided information regarding work for home as well ("Communities," 2007).

The study did find that less than half the schools incorporated specific procedures or policies in communicating decision making issues involving alcohol, drug, or injury prevention. However, closer to half the schools encouraged family participation in various parent meetings ("Communities," 2007).

Community based programs benefit students, families, faculty and staff. Approximately one third of the schools in the study had policies requiring students to participate in various community service organizations, and high schools were more likely to require students to participate in service learning classes and clubs. These community service organizations addressed health issues, health education, and opportunities for growth and work ("Communities," 2007).

For comparison, this study included differences in the 2000 study and the 2006 study. Changes in practices, policies, and involvement all increased in the second assessment. Communication increased, health education increased, collaboration with businesses increased, and increases were also seen in health or physical education classes relating to outside organization and community functions ("Communities," 2007).

This study indicated that "one of the strongest predictors of family and community involvement is what the school does to promote it" ("Communities," 2007, p. 1). Community schools, focusing on the partnerships between the school and community increases student learning and achievement. The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development indicates that "educating the whole child requires the community" ("Communities," 2007, p. 1).

Most schools center on the work within the confines of the school itself, rather than outside opportunities and partnerships that could influence positive growth in academic achievement or social improvements (Anderson-Butcher, Lawson, Iachini, Flaspohler, Bean, & Wade-Mdivanian 2010). Full service schools that focus on the "co-location" of services and programs, incorporating families, community, and outside

agency partnerships create community schools. Mental health, physical activity, youth clubs and activities, and other services including assessment, consultation, prevention and intervention are utilized in community schools, impacting student achievement and growth, as well as improving the health of the students and families involved. Community schools allow schools and districts to "gain influence over multiple conditions affecting student achievement, healthy development, and overall school success" (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2010).

The Ohio Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement (OCCMSI) incorporates partnerships including schools, families, community agencies, neighborhood organizations, businesses, and higher education institutions. The OCCMSI assesses needs with students and families, prioritizes those needs, then creates structures where decisions can be made regarding the student and family to adapt to the unique needs of them regarding health, social health, academic success, and any other factors that the partnership discovers. Milestones are built to judge fidelity of the program and success, gaps are discovered and addressed, collaboration between leadership, district, families, faculty, and community are utilized to ensure strategies and processes are met. Evaluation of the programs is used, and new templates are created based on need as the program continues (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2010).

The program was implemented with these templates in six Ohio schools, and each school participated by filling out applications, reports on strengths of current partnerships, and representativeness of Ohio's "considerable geographic, demographic, cultural, and political diversity." Each school was provided with an OCCMSI guide, received assistance from consultants on the program, and received $5,000 to support

efforts to implement for professional development, training, and other needs. The study was conducted over an 18 month period. Both quantitative and qualitative measurements were utilized to determine outcomes and results based on surveys and interviews. Schools involved also documented their own progress and evaluated their progress during monthly updates with representatives from each school and consultants (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2010).

Overall, results indicated a positive relationship between the program and feelings of those involved. At risk signs were more readily noticed by teachers and staff, teachers were less likely to worry to ask for help from others when dealing with students who were at risk (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2010).

These pilot sites showed increases in student achievement during the implementation period as well. Through the process, sites developed teaming schedules, established collaborative times to discuss progress and outcomes, increased wraparound services, and utilized resource management teams to determine most needed intervention strategies for students at risk. Social workers were used in many of the pilot schools, and allowed for a more comprehensive view of the student including outside issues, family issues, and social and health concerns as well. Different innovations were found at each site, depending on what the school felt was a need at the time. While some schools focused on parent engagement, other schools focused more on academic gains and core subject enhancement. Due to these differences, different outcomes were measured form site to site: schools that focused on academic gains saw gains in that area, while schools that focused more on engagement saw more qualitative

gains regarding involvement, but not as much quantitative gains in academic achievement (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2010).

Through a strengthening families grant, the Chesterfield Community Services Board planned and implemented a program titled "Implementing the Families and Schools Together" (FAST) (Ackley & Cullen, 2010). The purpose of this program was to prioritize risk factors derived from a needs assessment including management practices, academic failure in elementary school, alienation and rebelliousness, and community laws and norms favorable toward drug/alcohol use. Implemented in a targeted area based on the needs assessment, the model was developed for teacher identified at risk students, where not only the student but the entire family were involved. The FAST model being utilized with the family addressed family functioning, prevention of school failure, prevention of substance abuse, and stress from daily life situations. The school created a FAST "team" who were trained on these focused areas, then were called to deliver the program for up to 25 families at a time.

Through communication sessions, games, therapy, classes, support groups, weekly meetings, and informal conversations, the FAST program was conducted over an extended period in the school, spanning multiple years. Recruitment difficulties were noted in one of the schools, as the FAST program spent time after school, and families were discouraged by the thought of having students at the school location for up to 11 hours during the day when the FAST program was in effect. Former graduates of the FAST program were recruited and involved and this resulted in gains in enrollment by new students (Ackley & Cullen, 2010).

According to the study, outcome goals were met based on pre and post surveys of those participating in the program. Family relationships, preventing school failure, reducing stress were all positively influenced as a result of the program implementation. Consumer satisfaction at schools where the program was implemented was very high. Because of the community involvement, group meetings, and group therapy, families felt more at ease knowing they were not the only ones with struggles that others were experiencing (Ackley & Cullen, 2010).

Implications of the study include the positive influence that collaboration between community, family, and school can have on feelings of students and parents. Academic achievement may also be positively influenced through the program (Ackley & Cullen, 2010). Utilizing programs such as the FAST program can help rejoin the bond between schools and families, and the results could be a strong increase on teaching the whole child as a member of the community rather than just increasing informational knowledge for scoring on tests.

Blank and Berg (2006) discuss the different opinions surrounding the narrow focus of standardized testing plays a role in philosophies and regulations impacting school mandates and reform. In their report for the Coalition for Community Schools, Blank and Berg outline three general questions: What are the conditions that foster the development of the whole child? Who is responsible for creating these conditions? What does it take to build and foster these conditions (Blank & Berg, 2006)?

Not only do multiple methods of instruction and guidance help with developing the whole child during school, but Blank and Berg state that outside indicators including "nutrition, parent participation in their child's school, time spent watching

television…mother's educational level…family involvement...and student mobility" all play important roles as well (Blank & Berg, 2006, p. 7). In order to address the needs of the whole child, certain conditions must be met and a framework must be developed which address these needs.

Blank and Berg (2006) discuss the ongoing public debate surrounding the responsibility of serving the whole child. The public's understanding of schools and families differs greatly among individuals. While this appears to be a "no-win" situation, the solution is for schools, community, and families must work together rather than debating who is responsible for developing the child. As the school becomes a community resource and becomes a central hub for community involvement and partnerships, the responsibility debate becomes a focused collaboration addressing needs of children. Lead agencies in communities play a large role in fostering these partnerships, including church organizations, health systems, and YMCA buildings can all work together on the convergence of shared responsibility (Blank & Berg, 2006).

Arguing for a similar approach to adapting to the needs of the whole child, Zaff and Smerdon (2008) propose a framework that develops children by involving both academic and developmental domains. In order to develop the whole child, resiliencies to at risk behaviors must be developed and fostered by policymakers. Success built at early levels in a child's first two decades of life will lead to further successes and improved child outcomes. Cognitive skills alone are not enough to prepare students for school. Interventions at both the early childhood level and through middle school are important to develop the whole child across multiple developmental domains, and success at these early levels will lead to success as they continue to grow. To achieve

this, connections must be made between family, school, small learning environments, curriculum, teachers, and community. Development in all of these areas will allow for smooth and positive transitions through school and into adulthood (Zaff & Smerdon, 2008).

Bryan (2005) also discusses fostering resilience through partnerships between school and community. She outlines this resiliency as being able to develop ways to succeed in academic settings regardless of factors that add difficulties to their educational lives, or at risk behaviors at home. Urban school district data indicated increased resiliency when certain factors including supportive adults at home, in the community, school, and in extracurricular programs. Partnerships that can be created and fostered through these networks will increase the child's ability to succeed in school, as well as self-perceptions. By removing stressors in a child's life through these partnerships, while building social capital and increased self-perceptions, students can achieve as much as peers in supportive families without these stressors (Bryan, 2005).

In a report discussing engaging students for success and citizenship, Melaville, Berg, and Blank (2006) point to the need for a community approach to learning. Community based learning links the student to the community, and "challenges them to develop a range of intellectual and academic skills in order to understand and take action on the issues they encounter in everyday life" (Melaville, Berg, & Blank, 2006, p. 3.). By closing the gap between educational systems and life experiences, community learning can help students realize life skills while still in school. Specific learning strategies involved in a community based effort include civic education, environmental education, place-based learning, service learning and work based

learning. These areas share commonalities of providing meaningful content, student voice, purpose, feedback, and relationships (Melaville et al., 2006). Outcomes collected from forty-eight schools indicate that school using "environment as an integrating context for learning" saw performance gains in 92 percent of schools over their traditional school peers. In addition to performance gains, Melaville, Berg, and Blank (2006) indicate survey results showing higher civic and moral outcomes, and some indicate increased wages and work selection.

In a recent report published by Child Trends, integrated student support systems are analyzed, incorporating the same characteristics as community schools developed through the community school coalition, the Children's Aid Society, and the Harlem's Children Zone. Key findings of these integrated student support systems include increased achievement scores, whole child development, increased educational success, and a positive return on investment through the development of these systems (Moore & Emig, 2014). Implications of this report are clear: developing and implementing community schools are not only cost effective, but have positive effects on student development and achievement.